

**POLISH
CYBERNETIC
POETRY.**

REFRESH

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korporacja ha!art

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BIO



URSZULA PAWLICKA

CYBERNETIC POETRY IN POLAND



The history of Polish cybernetic poetry begins with the year 2005, when the group Perfokarta, the initiator of not only cybernetic projects, but also of the theoretical basis for the genre, was conceived. The aims of the group include: “to create and develop a »dictionary« and »theory«, and also popularize research, experiments and creativity through mass media, the Internet and literary journals”¹.

The group was established by Roman Bromboszcz and Tomasz Misiak² at the Institute of Philosophy of the Adam Mickiewicz

1 <http://perfokarta.net/personel/personel.html>

2 **Tomasz Misiak** – musician, theoretician, experimenter. He explores the connections between sound and image. He works with auditive aspects. Author of the book *Estetyczne konteksty audiosfery* (English: *Aesthetic Contexts of the Audiosphere*) (WSNHiD, Poznań 2009). Websites: http://labela.perfokarta.net/tomasz_misiak, <http://kaleka.net>

University. It was intended as a way for philosophers and poets to join forces. They had started their non-commercial activity back in 2003, when they established their own group, KALeKA, which has continued to function to this day, and which “executes single events involving electronic music, computer animation and broadly understood poetry”³.

In 2007, Perfokarta was joined by Łukasz Podgórní, who, along with Bromboszcz, is a prominent representative of cybernetic poetry. The cooperation with Podgórní started with a joint performance at the club Diuna in Warsaw. At the same time, the group also welcomed Szczepan Kopyt (at present no longer a member of the group), and in 2008 – Tomasz Pułka⁴.

In 2010, the team was extended further by two authors: Piotr Puldzian Płucienniczak and Dominik Popławski⁵. In 2011, Leszek Onak was added to the group, and in 2013 – Miron Tee.

Perfokarta popularizes theoretical knowledge, featured both in academic publications and manifestos. In 2006, the journal „Rita Baum” published *Manifesto 1.1* by Bromboszcz, Marek Horek, Kopyt, Misiak and Podgórní. The proclamation included theses concerning the design of poetry, categories of inspiration, cybernetics and subject matter. This was the first time the term “machine” appeared; its function would

3 <http://kaleka.net/>

4 **Tomasz Pułka** – poet and experimenter. Author of volumes described as demonstrating some cybernetic qualities: *Mixtape* (SDK, Warszawa 2009) and *Zespół Szkół* (English: *School Complex*) (Korporacja Ha!art, Kraków 2010). Websites: <http://cichynabiau.blogspot.com>, <http://techwych.blogspot.com>

5 **Dominik Popławski** – musician, experimenter, artist. Author of audiovisual projects consisting of music and video. Website: <http://www.dominikpoplawski.pl/>

become forever linked with cybernetic poetry. The machine motif would later appear in the guidelines for the composition of poems and their reading. Negating the language of the past was meant to take the form of anaesthetization, and simulation would take the place of *mimesis*. The defect aesthetics they employ directs the user's attention to the properties of technological devices, especially those based on information bits.

Cybernetic poetry references algorithmic problems: a word becomes a numerical sign, hiding a numerical solution. It entangles the reader with the complicated rules of programming and difficult language of informatics. Therefore, the perception of the new genre needs to encompass such key concepts as: system, information, code, signal, noise and feedback. Significant in the process of correctly decoding cybernetic works are not only literary theories (e.g. the theory of deconstruction), but, first and foremost, concepts from the fields of communication and cybernetics. This is due to the fact that in their subject matter, the authors refer to issues of neurobiology, artificial intelligence, electronic prostheses and virtual reality. The artists have renamed the category of inspiration, which used to be inseparable from literary activity, brought on an enthusiastic state and allowed for creative work. Cyber poets have discarded inspiration and replaced it with a computer system. In his poem *Literatura elektroniczna* (English: *Electronic Literature*) from the volume *digital.prayer*, Bromboszcz describes a state of waiting – not so much for inspiration, but rather for a transfer:

One goes down the stairs downstairs

I go down the stairs downstairs

One gathers appliances and instruments

I take appliances and appliances

Downstairs those appliances and instruments

Are unpacked from bags

Downstairs I unpack the appliances

From bags

Later they are installed using cables

Yes, I install them later using

cables

One attaches them, at least some of them

to microphones. Yes, I attach them, some of them

to microphones.

And one waits. You never know how long. Actually,

one does not wait, when it is already known.

But you better

not do that (!?). Hearing, here, hearing

So one listens, for a moment, to that space, since it will

Sound. So I listen to that space

I hear nothing special

nothing in the air. And there is no deciding

moment (...)

(R. Bromboszcz, *Literatura elektroniczna*; digital.prayer)

The cybernetic poet acts as a creative cyborg, who needs to "wire himself up" to generate a piece. Boris W. Biriukow and Jefim S. Geller have pointed out how mental labor is replaced with the workings of an "intellectual and machine" – "work which is a sort of synthesis of the abilities of the human intellect and the analytical and computing »abilities« of the machine"⁶. A cybernetic poet need not be sensitive or spiritual anymore, but he has to possess those machine abilities, which means that poetic thinking has been replaced with mathematical thinking. The author is awaiting an influx of information which will allow him to generate automatic creation: "In the cybernetic poetry that I compose, I either reset myself completely and write like an automaton, trying not to correct anything, or I have a dictionary, a database, and I look for connections. These are two methods that I value highly alongside blank verse. If you do the math, you get about 1/3 of each of these techniques. This distribution is, obviously, an idealization"⁷, explains Bromboszcz. Inspiration is therefore replaced with the rule of software, statistics and installation. The romantic genius and prophet is replaced with a creative cyborg from somewhere in-between literature and informatics.

- *Manifesto 1.1* was supplemented with aspects of cyborgization and "the world of proper names" in a text published the same year in *Pro Arte*. There are mentions of prostheses as well as "bio" and "electro" junctions: "Circuits integrated with the human body. Aesthetics of precise

⁶ B. W. Biriukow, J. S. Geller, *Cybernetyka w naukach humanistycznych* (English: *Cybernetics in Humanities*) translation: J. Sarna, Intro.: J. Kossecki, Wrocław 1983, p. 323.

⁷ R. Bromboszcz, *Poddaję się dryfowi* (English: *I Let Myself Drift*), interview by U. Pawlicka. Niedoczytania.pl, 22.09.2010: <http://niedoczytania.pl/poddaje-sie-dryfowi-z-romanem-bromboszczem-rozmawiala-urszula-pawlicka/>

mechanics. Bio and electro junctions. Original prostheses. Copies better than originals. This pill will provide a permanent connection to the system of virtual reality"⁸. More attention was given to the term "the world of proper names" (Polish: świat imion własnych – ŚIW), which can be defined as all industrial creation. A unit is haunted by objects which influence the shape of its identity. The manifesto speaks of "collective hallucination caused by ŚIW". Man cannot separate himself from the objects around him anymore, and he cannot think for himself, but only through the creations of artificial culture. "The world of proper names" gains physical shape, which is only one step away from the reification of man and animization of objects. The thesis of crossing the boundary between the technological and the biological reappears, and brings with it a feeling of chaos and danger. This is the source of the glossolalia and cacophony in cybernetic poetry.

In 2010, Bromboszcz published *Manifesto 2.0*, titled *System dedukcyjny poezji cybernetycznej*⁹ (English: *The Deductive System of Cybernetic Poetry*) on Perfokarta's website. According to its author, *Manifesto 1.1* "was a sort of an alliance, coming out, opening a path, opening to the possibility of cooperation, playing, writing together, etc"¹⁰. *Manifesto 2.0*, in turn, is a manifestation of self-awareness and a summary of the stipulations that cybernetic poetry should follow; it is a logical recapitulation of the theory of

⁸ *Manifesto 1.1 + poems*, Pro Arte 2006, Issue 23. Available at: <http://perfokarta.net/root/embryo.html>

⁹ *System dedukcyjny poezji cybernetycznej. Manifest 2.0* (English: *Deductive System of Cybernetic Poetry. Manifesto 2.0*): <http://perfokarta.net/root/sd.html>. First published at: <http://www.ha.art.pl/wiadomosci/1081>.

¹⁰ **R. Bromboszcz**, *Poddaję się dryfowi* (English: *I Let Myself Drift*), interview by U. Pawlicka.

THE MANIFESTO MENTIONS THE ISSUE OF ART BORDERING ON ADVERTISING, DESIGN AND POLITICS

a new literary genre. It is focused on several categories, literally referencing Pierce's work: symbol, signal and noise. Cyberpoetry is concretized as the experience of the above elements, constituting the "empirical universe". Important issues include differentiating and defining noise and information as components of communication; this is discussed further by Bromboszcz in *Estetyka zakłóceń*¹¹ (English: *Aesthetics of Disruption*). The manifesto mentions the issue of art bordering on advertising, design and politics; the recipient of cyberpoetry experiences a poli-aesthetic creation referring him to multiple genres. Interpretation was defined as a "symbolic operation" – a procedure on a variety of materials, referencing diverse aesthetics. Bromboszcz underlines how deeply experimental creation is rooted in the avant-garde. Postmodernity was therefore described as "repeating the dead" and "rewriting the spirit".

Cybernetic poetry is great proof of how impossible it is to break with the art of the past. *Manifesto 2.0* ends with a summarizing statement: **"The web, labyrinth and database are the most proper orthographies".**

- This point incorporates something indispensable to analyzing cybernetic poetry – the whole of it can be encapsulated in the term "database", referring us to algorithms and control theory.

Apart from the manifestos, Perfokarta also published leaflets and presentations in magazines. In 2006, Bromboszcz, Florek, Kopyt, Misiak and Podgórní announced the digital *ulotka* no. 2 (English: *leaflet* no. 2). Cybernetic poetry was defined as "a linguistic game which aims at the reformulation of some of the convictions rooted in the automatism of social assessments"¹². They also presented more widely the procedures of cyberpoetry, based on machine composition and the *cut-up* technique. In consecutive publications, such as a catalogue published in 2007 by the Wieża Ciśnień Gallery in Konin, a poster titled "Profuzja plazmy elektrycznej" (English: "Profusion of Electrical Plasma") or in the „Wakat” magazine from the same year, they presented their own cybernetic compositions.

One publication worth noticing was *Książka i co dalej 7*¹³ (English: *The Book and What Next 7*) by Bromboszcz, Misiak and Podgórní, published by the AT Gallery in Poznań in March

¹² Cybernetic poetry – leaflet no. 2: http://perfokarta.net/prasa/dwa/ulotka_2.html

¹³ R. Bromboszcz, T. Misiak, Ł. Podgórní., *Książka i co dalej 7* (English: *The Book and What Next 7*), Poznań 2008.

2008. The bilingual publication (with a foreword and translation by Mariusz Pisarski) is focused on cybernetic poetry, net art and computer art. There are some descriptive pieces dealing with the definition of cyberpoetry, as well as the problems of tradition, narration, perception and authorship.

In December 2011 Onak and Podgórní established a web publishing company, Hub Wydawniczy Rozdzielczość Chleba, with the goal of "infusing the circulation with fresh gigabytes of new media and experimental literature, and systematic study of cybernetic culture"¹⁴. The first issue of *Rozdzielczość Chleba*¹⁵, from December 2011, has a demonstrative character, starting with the proclaimed manifesto and ending with the presentation of cybernetic creativity.

The introductory *Manifest Rozdzielczości Chleba*¹⁶ (English: *Bread Resolution Manifesto*), initiated by Onak and Podgórní, involves a number of theses reinterpreting literature and cultural life under the influence of the Internet. It is the first text to so expressively criticize literature and indicate a direction for its further progress.

Onak and Podgórní postulate shifting cultural life to the Internet, whose functions are interaction and movement. This is because they notice the increasing activity of artists and critics on the web, which enables them to quickly publish their works, immediately connect and instantly exchange opinions. They

¹⁴ Hub Wydawniczy Rozdzielczość Chleba: <http://śc-ch.pl/nosnik.html>

¹⁵ *Rozdzielczość Chleba* 2011, Issue 1: <http://śc-ch.pl/nosnik.html>

¹⁶ Manifest Rozdzielczości Chleba (English: Bread Resolution Manifesto), (in:) *Rozdzielczość Chleba* 2011, Issue 1, pp. 4-7: <http://śc-ch.pl/nosnik.html>

“WORD. IMAGE. SOUND. MOVEMENT. INTERACTION”

also observe the digitalization of magazines, replacing print with electronic versions, hence their slogans about the role of publishers, booksellers and printers, whose “milk cow is dying”.

- Onak and Podgórni demand the rejection of paper – like the enthusiasts of futurism, they call for burning libraries and freeing copyrights. The digitalization of culture shall lead to freeing content – the demonstrators provocatively propose an actual hacker attack on the system to achieve this.

The second issue brought up in the manifesto is the nature of contemporary literature, in accordance with the slogan: *“The naked, unarmed poetic word demands to be electrocuted”*.

The authors demand the concepts of theory of literature to be radically redefined in order to parallel the changes it has undergone with the popularization of the new media: “There are no compositions – there are programs, objects, pseudo-codes and web performances”. “Poetry as disk space” is characterized by new poetics and aesthetics, i.e. screen shots, reposts, remixes, glitches, errors and noises. “Word. Image. Sound. Movement. Interaction” – those are the “codecs” of the new media literature. The status of the author is changing;

“»ANALOGUE
CYBERPOETRY« IS
A CORRECT TERM. ITS
ROOTS CAN BE FOUND
IN THE WORKS OF
SUCH NOVELISTS AS
CALVINO, BARTHELME,
BECKETT, BURROUGHS.

he is becoming a programmer and DJ, generating algorithmic texts which are hypertextual and full of spam.

The text was signed by five artists – each of whom represents a different artistic technique and studies the limits of both the material and the recipient. Piotr Puldzian Płucienniczak's work is based on glitch aesthetics. Bromboszcz uses the languages of software and generates prosthesis texts. Works by Podgórní are characterized by defect and remix. Onak chooses algorithm, screen and remix.

Analogue cyberpoetry

Unlike digital cyberpoetry, which is the quintessence of new media, its analogue counterpart does not defend itself so strictly. And yet, the volumes by Bromboszcz and Podgórní do prove that it can exist in print, and, what is more – it can still fulfill its stipulations. “»Analogue cyberpoetry« is a correct term, its roots can be found in the works of such novelists as Calvino, Barthelme, Beckett, Burroughs. Wherever the amount of the out-of-ordinary is high, where syntax is rich with surprising phraseology and unusual metaphors, the information level is elevated, bordering on noise, becoming thus borderline impossible to understand”¹⁷. The fundamental properties of cybernetic poetry cannot be transferred onto paper – due to obvious constraints of print. This does not mean, however, that they will be completely absent. Analogue cyberpoetry focuses on the structure and meaning of the text, since it should speak to the reader both through its “form” and “content”.

The following cybernetic properties can be pointed out as present in traditional forms of poetry:

1. Writing based on the rules of machine composition, which leads to absurd word combinations;
2. Writing that is in accordance with algorithms;
3. The creation of musicality by employing transrational language (*zaum*), using alliteration and accumulation of

¹⁷ R. Bromboszcz, *Poddaję się dryfowi* (English: *I Let Myself Drift*), interview by U. Pawlicka.

words whose meanings are connected to sounds;

4. Aesthetics of interference, visible on the formal and semantic level;

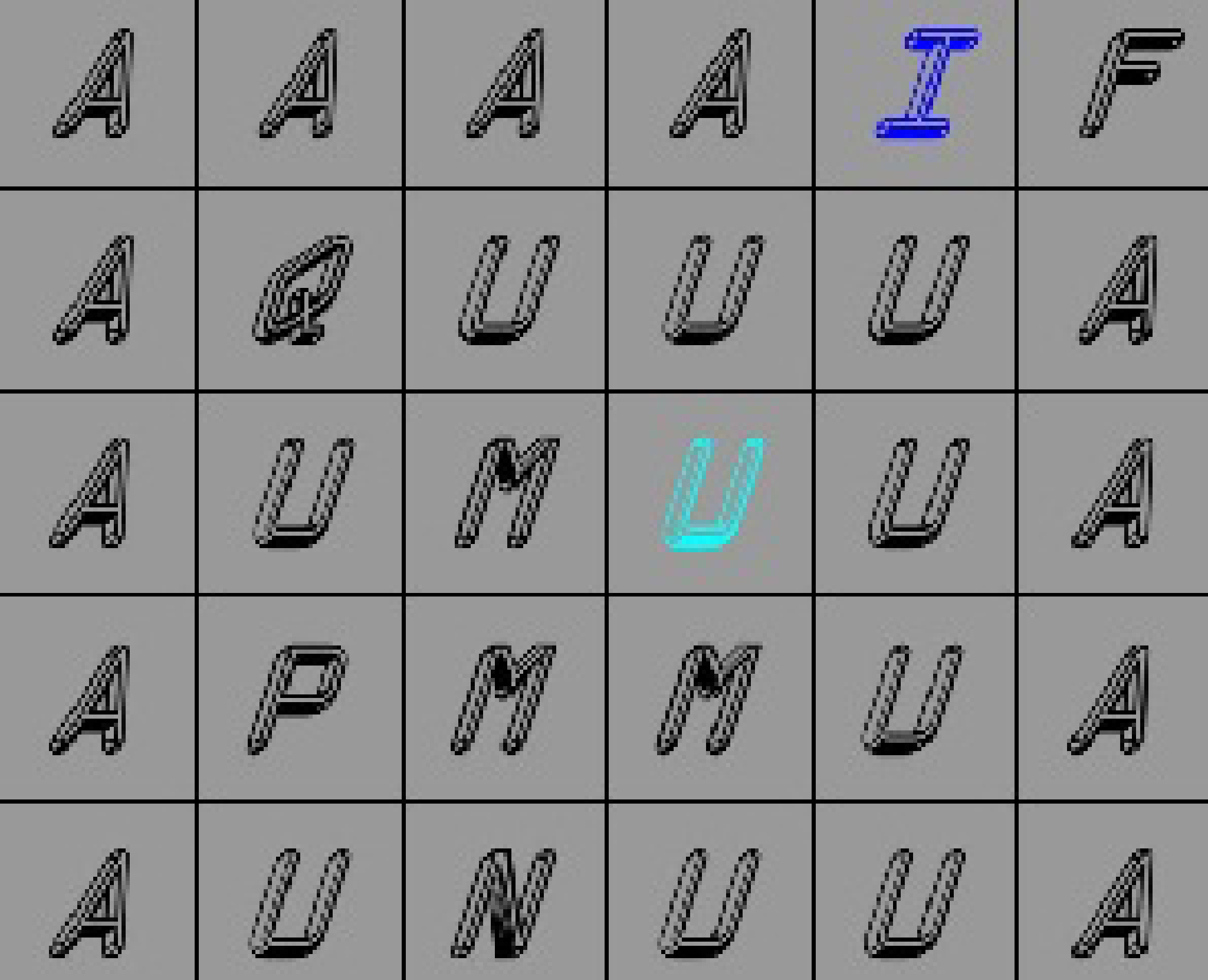
5. Subject matter focused around the technization of life, pointing out such oppositions as: natural-artificial, nature-technology, virtual-real.

The issues undertaken in cybernetic poetry are: fascination with technology, which transforms into the motif of a threat to society, the problem of losing intimacy due to invigilation, man's place in cybernetic reality, reconfiguration of the world in the name of technologization and the creation of a new form of mankind.

Cybernetic poetry has turned out not to be completely dependent on the computer. Sound has been replaced with phoneticity, and movement with an appropriate spatial arrangement. While the digital version emphasizes the representative quality, the analogue one focuses on the criterion of meaning. Analogue poetry introduces an important element of cyberpoetry – subject matter focused around the newest technological achievements, and the fascinations and dangers linked to them.

TRANSLATION: EWA BOMBA

This excerpt is taken from: U. Pawlicka, *(Polska) poezja cybernetyczna. Konteksty i charakterystyka* (English: *(Polish) Cybernetic Poetry. Contexts and Characteristics*), Kraków 2012.



ROMAN
BROMBOSZCZ
VARIATIONS
SCREENSHOT



THE CYBERNETIC POETRY MANIFESTO 1.1

Poetry Design

Comparing “comprehensible” poetry with “incomprehensible” poetry is not appropriate. We do not attempt any intricate academic debate on this subject. Instead, we offer you a perspective from which you can observe previous poetics as well as poets together with their poems through a cybernetic poetry movement.

Let us present writing/reading as a communication process in which a writer/reader communicates with himself/herself, and afterwards with others. When examining a poem, let us see a machine rather than a body. Let us try to reject its language, let us change it.

So-called “inspiration” fades away and sometimes even vanishes altogether. Systematic restructuring and destructing verbal matter kills both habit and style. Statistics and information theory, collage and montage. Future mutated forms.

Cybernetics as a set of concepts

Traces of cybernetics can be found in engineering studies, philosophy and art. Some of the issues that used to be addressed in cybernetics are now the domain of automatics and robotics striving to build multifunctional machines that would display adaptability to complex environments.

Cognitive scientists and neurobiologists are still trying to find out how the brain works. New media, including computers, have become the tools of new art – net art and hypermedia.

In philosophy, one question is still open, namely the possibility of human transformation.

Any discipline can be linked to cybernetics provided that it is able to adapt cybernetic key concepts such as system, feedback, information, code, signal or noise.

Technical, philosophical, and artistic problems can be solved by adapting terms from a dictionary of cybernetics. In poetry, cybernetics might be helpful in developing new tools and in controlling creation process. At the same time, it seems important to problematize the effects and scope of the electronic media influence on the human body, common sense and axiology.

Cybernetic poetry is a hybrid of two attitudes, namely that of a designer who puts linguistic material (grapheme, phoneme, sound, image) through a series of functions and procedures, and that of handling the issues of electronics and control. If you follow this method, such terms as artificial intelligence, electronic prosthesis, virtual reality and others should be analyzed and interpreted.

This excerpt is taken from *The Cybernetic Poetry Manifesto 1.1*

<<http://perfokarta.net/root/embryo.html>>



Łukasz Podgórni, Tomasz Misiak, Roman Bromboszcz, „The Plasma Collision AT Poruterak” - ASP / Galeria AT, Poznań 2008 (fot. Marek Glinkowski)



Tomasz Pułka, Roman Bromboszcz, Łukasz Podgórni, „niscy w systemach” - poetry festival „Manifestacje Poetyckie”, Warszawa 2008 (fot. ?)

MARIUSZ PISARSKI

**POETRY
PLUGGED IN. ON
CYBERNETIC
POETRY**

Cyberneticians say that robots are instructions that take human form. Poets sometimes say that poetry is a machine made of words. Cybernetic poetry combines these two discourses and raises the following questions: Has the realm of poetry always been a cybernetic one? If so, what is it really, and what is the relation of its building blocks – words and the media – with the things it is enriched with, such as image and sound?

At first encounter, the digital works of Roman Bromboszcz, Łukasz Podgórní and Tomasz Misiak are not easy to understand. It seems as if they had lives of their own, were indifferent toward us and somewhat self-centered. However, if they manage to arouse our interest during a short performance on the screen, the questions posed here will arise.

Cybernetic Poetry and Tradition

Dada and futurism are obvious points of reference for the works of Podgórní, who quite meaningfully dubbed his web

“GYLYRYJYN FYTYRYZ LYDYWYCH CYBYRSTYRCYJ”

gallery “gylyryjyn fytyryz lydywych cybyrstyrcyj”¹⁸. Roman Bromboszcz and Tomasz Misiak, on the other hand, may be associated with the activities and principles of the Fluxus movement. The work of all three of these poets (especially the “alive”, animated and sound types of their work) can be called a kind of performance that takes place on a computer screen. We could stop at this point. However, there is one more tradition to which cybernetic poets are attached that deserves mentioning.

It is about this entire poetic trend based on real or virtual machines that are involved in the process of creating meaning. This tradition, sometimes called aleatoric tradition or prosthetic poetry, is derived from formal rules and algorithms found on the outside as well as on the inside of an artistic work. Its origins can be found not as much in surrealist *cadaver exquis* (exquisite corpse) as in the curbed finesse of Renaissance sestina, baroque rondeaux and anagrams, and Japanese haiku.

Poetry based on formal restrictions, randomness and generative elements was written by poets including Charles

EQUIPPING THE POEM WITH A COMBINATORIAL ELEMENT AND ENHANCING IT WITH METRIC RESTRICTIONS RESULTS IN A MACHINE-POEM.

Olsen, William Carlos Williams, Raymond Russel, and then Harry Mathews (and many poets of the Oulipo group), Raymond Federman, and Charles O. Hartman. The most important lesson learned from this legacy can be summarized in two points. Firstly, cybernetic poetry does not have to be restricted to the word form: it can also be a piece of prose, an art piece, a music piece (a great precursor is John Cage) or a film piece (algorithmic and prosthetic poetics of Greenaway's films). In this view, even a hefty tome of prose by Georges Perec, *Life: A User's Manual* (orig. *La Vie mode d'emploi*), should be considered cybernetic poetry as well. Secondly, poetry

has been cybernetic in nature for a long time: it is the rhyme scheme that can make the task of composing a poem quite unpredictable. Equipping the poem with a combinatorial element and enhancing it with metric restrictions results in a machine-poem. A Muse whispering a poem in your ear is not only a romantic metaphor...

A serious or even revolutionary process of redefining genre is just one of many surprises that we owe to cybernetic poetry. The creative experiences and procedures of its predecessors are put into the digital world. The machine, or the heart it is built on, are processors – the hearts of our personal computers.

Where is the Sense in that? A Word on Perception

“Echem”¹⁹, “four.values”²⁰, “bycie.i.czas”²¹, or “artykulator”²² by Roman Bromboszcz are kinds of mathematical, conceptual works kept in the spirit of minimalism and aesthetics of Atari that can be manipulated by the user. In this case, sound and animation are as important as words whether or not they appear. The works of Łukasz Podgórní, his “klawikordy”, are spread between two poles: a simple manifesto in the form of a small graphic work and a dynamic, audio, animated postcard. However, the works of both poets share some features.

19 R. Bromboszcz, *Echem*: <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/echem/echem.html>

20 R. Bromboszcz, *four.values*: http://labela.perfokarta.net/roman_bromboszcz/four_values/four_values_pl.php

21 R. Bromboszcz, *bycie.i.czas*: <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/bycie.i.czas/bycie.i.czas.html>

22 R. Bromboszcz, *artykulator*: <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/artykulator/artykulator.html>

The basic unit in their works is not a verse or a blend but a length of time between what we see on the screen and our reaction to it, as well as the meaning we give to it. A “unit of reading”, identified by Roland Barthes in Balzac’s work and defined by the moment we take our eyes off the printed page actuated by reflection, mystery, admiration or simply fatigue, becomes condensed and dispersed at the same time in this particular case. When a work is performed in less than a minute, those units of reading – *lexias* – will be fewer in number, shorter or (during the first reading) not present at all.

A reader’s success is finding his or her own personal basic unit of meaning, either by discovering the rhythm of changing shapes or by finding some sort of meaning-carrier in a sequence of flashing letters. Those pieces of meaning are a reward for the reader who finds them and who can now either put them together or keep them dispersed so that the only thing left is the aura, atmosphere, and flavour of the work itself.

The works of Tomasz Misiak have a slightly different yet similar character to Podgórní’s static works. References to techniques developed by Mez – a net.art veteran – are evident here. In these works, a computer code is involved in the artistic work at all levels. However, what comes to the fore is the word, “infected” with computer language and treated on equal cultural rights with a natural language. The result may be either funny or frightening. The natural character of language seems to be dominated by digitality just as language used to be disrupted by newspeak in communist Poland. Misiak’s slogans,

presented on grey backgrounds quite unlike the Photoshop style, resemble communist posters or banners that streets and workplaces used to be compulsorily decorated with. If the works of Podgórní and Bromboszcz may be considered digital postcards, then the works of Misiak are digital billboards.

Tell Me a Story. On Narrative in Cybernetic Poetry

A clear *diegetic axis* can be found in the structure of stories, films or even poems: the content is presented in a non-random order, and even *prolepsis* (anticipation) together with *analepsis* (back reading) are variants of linearity. According to Jean Pierre Balpe, cybernetic poetry is a case of *alepsis*: we do not know whether the perceived elements (blend, sentence, animation sequence) precede or follow one another. Each of these elements is likely to be autonomous, and the duration of each is equalized. What we are facing here is a holographic or modular character of a text. Even though it is considered a distinctive feature of new media, it appeared in the aleatoric experiments of the 20th-century avant-garde and neo-avant-garde, for example in the works of John Cage...

Modularity changes narration. Is it like pulling words out of a hat? Yes, but it is not everything. One more problem emerges, namely a hidden mechanism, ticking in the background, in which the digital work has been encoded. All its possible tricks, due to which the artistic work reveals its fragments depending on the prior moves of the user, make you feel insecure.

- For instance, there are nine or sixteen squares on the screen; after moving the cursor over one of them, a word appears or a sound is heard. Let us assume that I am systematic – I begin with square A1, and end on D3. If I transform art into a story, I do it here as well. I consider the digital work to be finished, read. I close the browser window.

What will happen if the algorithm of this particular work is written so that the systematic reader starting with A1 gets the least interesting version of the “story”, and the reader randomly clicking on nine squares gets something extra? Such manipulations are a piece of cake for the author-programmer; however, its consequences are not. They are a hard nut to crack for a traditional author seen as a narrator.

In such poor narrative conditions, even the smallest fragment of the work has to carry a possible meaning of its other fragments and speak out in the name of the probably unattainable whole. The story is put together and arranged by a patient (or not) reader. Specific solutions are clearly much simpler, and sometimes very straightforward. It does not mean, however, that they are not important in a more general narrative about the instances of contemporary art in which they are put.

This is the reason why cybernetic poetry may meet with a mixed reception. It may be considered derisive. However, thanks to such procedures, poetry has a potential to rejuvenate and show its new faces.

Who is the Author?

A couple of intriguing obstacles emerge between the author and the reader, especially in the works that involve our active and operational participation: the code and its execution, and the aspect of mechanism and presentation. In the middle, the matrix of the work can be found on two opposite ends – the author and the reader. The aspects of the code and presentation are connected by the feedback mechanism that systematically changes the development of the work depending on the reader's (i.e. user's) actions or (in the case of a passive viewer) the coded original scenario.

Cybernetic poetry is not the work of computers, nor is it the work of robots. It is the work of cyborgs, i.e. authors who base their activity on the prosthesis, which in this case is a computer, the programming languages communicating with it, and the interface with its constraints and affordances. The history of cybertext, i.e. computer-produced stories in particular, clearly shows the nature of the cyborg: a person who willy-nilly corrects the machine where he or she thinks it is appropriate, more "poetic", and more "artistic". To a programmer, a computer is an idiot that can be taught to pretend not to be one. For Stephen King writing another bestseller, a computer is a loyal, silent servant. For a poet unknown to King, nicknamed podgórní, a computer becomes Doctor Frankenstein's monster in an original performance that is unleashed onto the stage while the poet pushes himself aside and listens, together with the audience, to the sounds imitating a crashed motherboard. The show is never completely predictable.

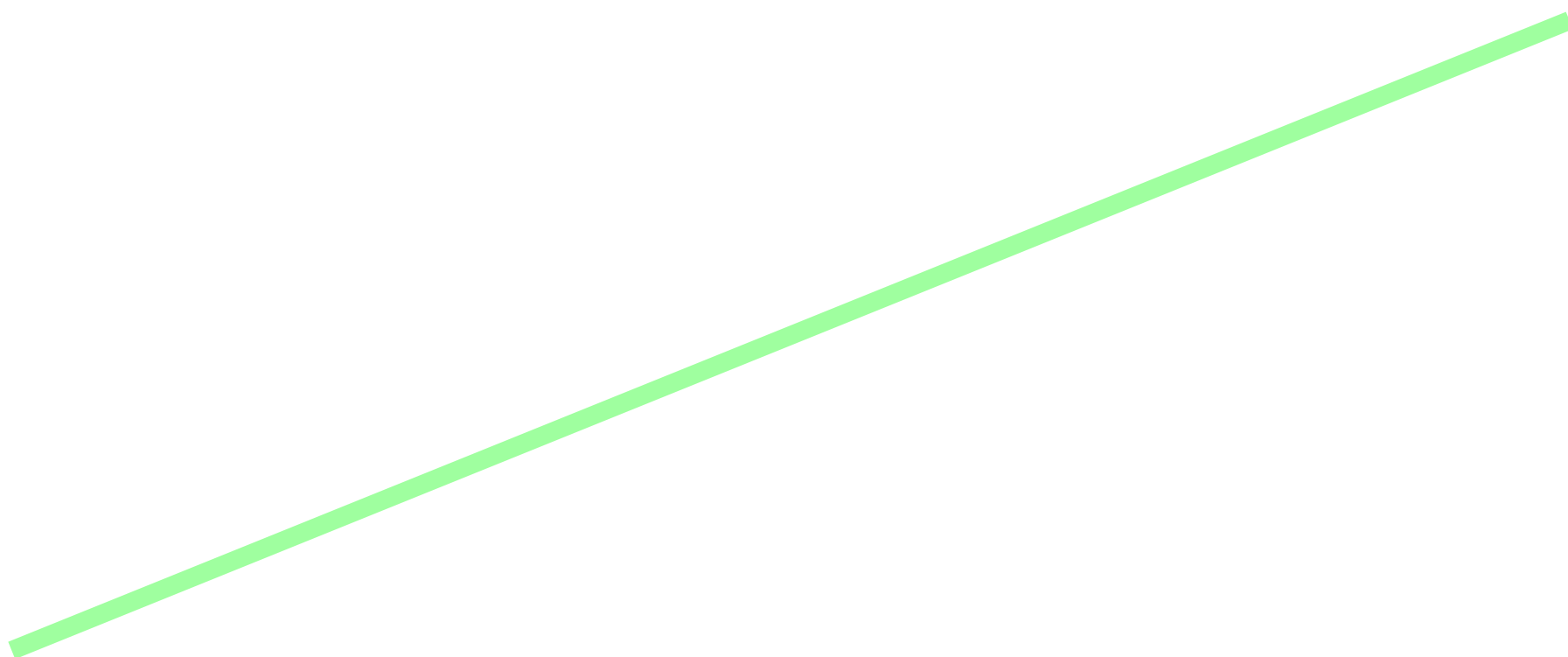
Cybernetic Poetry as the Art of Counterprotocols

Distortion is one of the key words in the new wave of net. art poets. In this case, we can even speak of the poetics of distortion, and no wonder. Internet art has been accompanied by disruption techniques from the very beginning. Using a computer in an unusual and impractical way that threatens its life and health is just one aspect that is closer to the convention of performance. The destruction or transgression of the established protocols of communication and conduct in the digitalizing world is the second one, aspiring to act as social criticism. Thanks to cybernetic poetry, we have a chance to get to know both sides of distortion activity. The graphic works of Podgórní and Misiak that expose interface disturbances in graphic programs enhanced by sounds that imitate the alarming noise of a crashing computer are a distortion of both the established codes of conduct in the environment of new technologies and the very act of creating in new media.

As for Bromboszcz, he intentionally brings back the environment of over 30-year-old Commodore and Atari sounds in his works, not to mention the clash of natural poetic speech with computer code errors and degenerations. In their interpretation, cybernetic poetry turns out to be a critique of image, a critique of language and a critique of the digital medium on which it leeches.

TRANSLATION: MARCIN PIŃKOWSKI

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on.cybernetic.poetry.html](http://perfokarta.net/theory/poetry.plugged.in..on.cybernetic.poetry.html)



➤ on the next page

ŁUKASZ
PODGÓRNI
COPY THE
CODE

Nach

atech2001



Prove you're human.

ROMAN BROMBOSZCZ

THE DEDUCTIVE SYSTEM OF CYBERNETIC POETRY

Manifesto 2.0

1. Philosophy is enlightened by art, religion and technology.
2. Science is an empirical philosophy, a part of philosophy.
3. Silence does not exist empirically, it is an idea.
4. Noise exists as a phenomenon, idea and correlate of information.
5. A signal is a ratio between the noise and information.
6. Symbols, signals and information create an empirical universe.
7. Symbols, signals, information and energy create a transcendental continuum.
8. Art absorbs its border area, partially becoming design, advertising and politics.
9. Religion was the prevailing ideology throughout the development of modernity.
10. In postmodernity, the shape of culture has changed in its structure.

11. Postmodernity is a repetition of pre-existing digital material available in binary form, but only from the last century.

12. The sensual is both theoretical and empirical in nature, as is aesthetics and ethics, where the empirical and theoretical aspects are considered synchronous in evaluation.

13. The religious is the continuum of a group that emerges on the border of cultural atoms.

14. Practice is a path which generates the work.

15. The work and the path create a web, which is partially a labyrinth.

16. The situation of being thrown into the web is a situation where the labyrinth has no boundaries, and so it cannot be perceived from the outside.

17. The situation of being thrown into the labyrinth is analogous to the brain in a vat.

18. The web and the labyrinth are new tracks of the path.

19. The path is a bond uniting individual groups.

20. The first is open. The open is this which never discloses itself.

21. Plurality is a primordial experience encountered by an individual during symbolic operations.

22. If a human individual is an *animale symbolicum*, it does not exclude them from being invested in the domain of infobahn and forming control over conditioned responses.

23. If animals use signals, they do not do so solely and exclusively.

24. Human individuals and animals both make use of noise, and this, together with energy, which should be understood as a vehicle, is part of communication. We are able to detect noise, even when the symbol is completely obscure.

25. A question arises: to what extent is energy used as a communication tool, seeing how politics and technology are powered by it, in the form of fuel, gas, electricity and so on.

26. Technology erupts as information, subject to which are both transistors and the humans who use it.

27. The situation of contemporary art and its links to philosophy are similar to the head of an individual immersed in a computer screen.

28. Groups of cultural atoms create a new substance of correct path searching.

29. Isolation overexposes a subject in the same way as light thrown on an electron running around a tunnel.

30. Recording decay after an explosion, which is, first of all, modernity and organization of theory in the view of practice and experience, and, second of all, organization across the network of cultural atoms.

31. A writer as a member of groups on the web, bound to roam around the web and gain connections.

32. A path as writing. Writing as thinking.

33. Repetition of dead souls. Rewriting of a chain of ghosts. The web, labyrinth and database are the most proper orthographies.



Roman Bromboszcz, "7chn13n13" – Galeria Wozownia, Toruń 2013 (fot. ?)



Roman Bromboszcz, Tomasz Misiak, "szCzEliny anagRAmu (profuzja)",
Gdańsk 2008 (fot. Kamil Loński)

EMILIA BRANNY-JANKOWSKA

THE
DESTRUCTION
OF TEXT
IN POLISH
E-LITERATURE.
ELECTRONIC
POETRY BY
PERFOKARTA

"Nin-sene.sense is too binary
andoppostiön, too much oall or nithing"

— writes Charles Bernstein in "A defense of poetry". Does it mean that between sense and nonsense there is an infinite number of points, in which poetry has its proper place? David Melnick, an author of even less legible poems, explains further:

"What can such poems do for you? You are a spider strangling in your own web, suffocated by meaning. You asked to be freed by these poems from the intolerable burden of trying to understand. The world of meaning: is it too large for you? too small? it doesn't fit. Too bad. It's no contest. You keep on trying. So do I."

These words reveal a very important hope and promise connected with modern poetry: to transcend the ways of understanding associated with and imposed by the language. The artists mentioned above try to achieve this postulate by introducing typographical changes and partially destroying the surface of language. This affects the reading process: the signifier is no longer a static object which contains or transmits meaning but it has to be restored or modified

by the reader. In Bernstein's poem the reader is able to complete this task, whereas most poems by Melnick remain uninterpretable. They can only be analysed as a mix of letters and transformed fragments of existing texts (including e.g. an Ichthyology textbook), thus introducing a kind of typographical intertextuality. The goal of these poems is to provide the reader with the experience of meaning-making which is not successful, because the signifier has been interfered with and is no longer representative.

Similar ideas and means are behind a considerable part of Polish electronic literature. The destruction of textuality seems to be the key issue both in the first known Polish hypertext, *AE* by Robert Szczerbowski, and in the majority of electronic poems by the Perfokarta group. The goal of these works is to allow the reader transcend the barriers of language as a system by involving him/her in a game with the signifier, which leads to the estrangement of textual surface and makes it impossible to be read in a conventional way.

(...)

Perfokarta: the revolt against the word

The disruption of meaning is the key to Polish cybernetic poetry, as it is practised by the Perfokarta group. The Perfokarta poets, including Roman Bromboszcz, Tomasz Misiak and Łukasz Podgórní, draw on dadaism, Fluxus, futurism, visual and concrete poetry²³. Their fascination with technology

23 M. Pisarski, *Poetry Plugged In. On Cybernetic Poetry*, <http://perfokarta.net/teoria/poezja.pod.pradem.o.poezji.cybernetycznej.html>.

as a means of interference and disruption applied to the signifier, results in a distinctive aesthetic project that could be called “broken machine aesthetics”. Perfokarta violates the language and methodically distorts the messages in order to achieve the desired artistic effect. The pieces are usually multimedia, sound and image being used as the substance along with the text.

In his *Cybernetic Poetry Mechanism 1.1* Roman Bromboszcz writes as follows:

“Let us consider writing/reading as a communication process in which the writer/reader communicates with himself first, and with others only later. Instead of seeing a poem as a body, let us see it as a machine. Instead of agreeing to language, let us disagree with it. Instead of describing, let us change.

////////////////////

The so-called inspiration fades into the background, and sometimes even totally disappears. Systematic conversion and destruction of a ready-made verbal matter eliminates both habit and style. The statistics and theory of information. Collage and installation/assemblage.

Collage and montage”²⁴. //////////////////

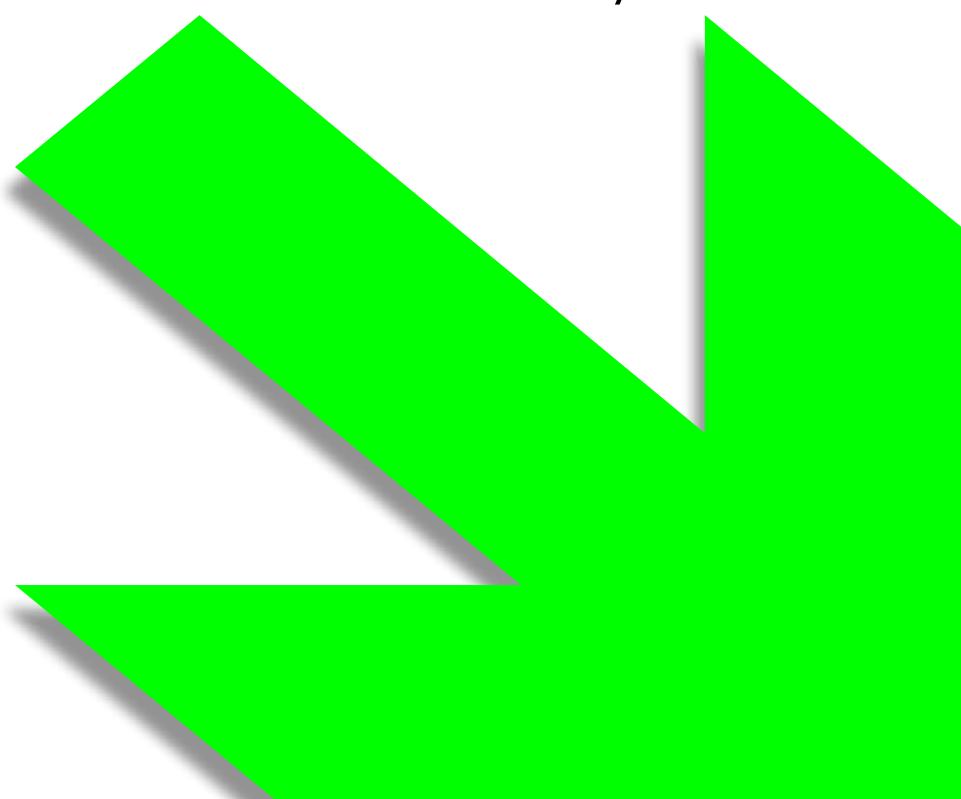
Language is violated both in the course of creation and interpretation of the poem. The author’s violence against language can be manifested in different ways. Practices akin to the methods used by L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poets are used, for example, by Roman Bromboszcz in *An Oil Market Crash*²⁵. The piece features an unintelligible text, arranged

24 *The Cybernetic Poetry Manifesto 1.1*, [www.perfokarta.net](http://www.perfokarta.net/root/manifest.html), <http://www.perfokarta.net/root/manifest.html>, April 2009.

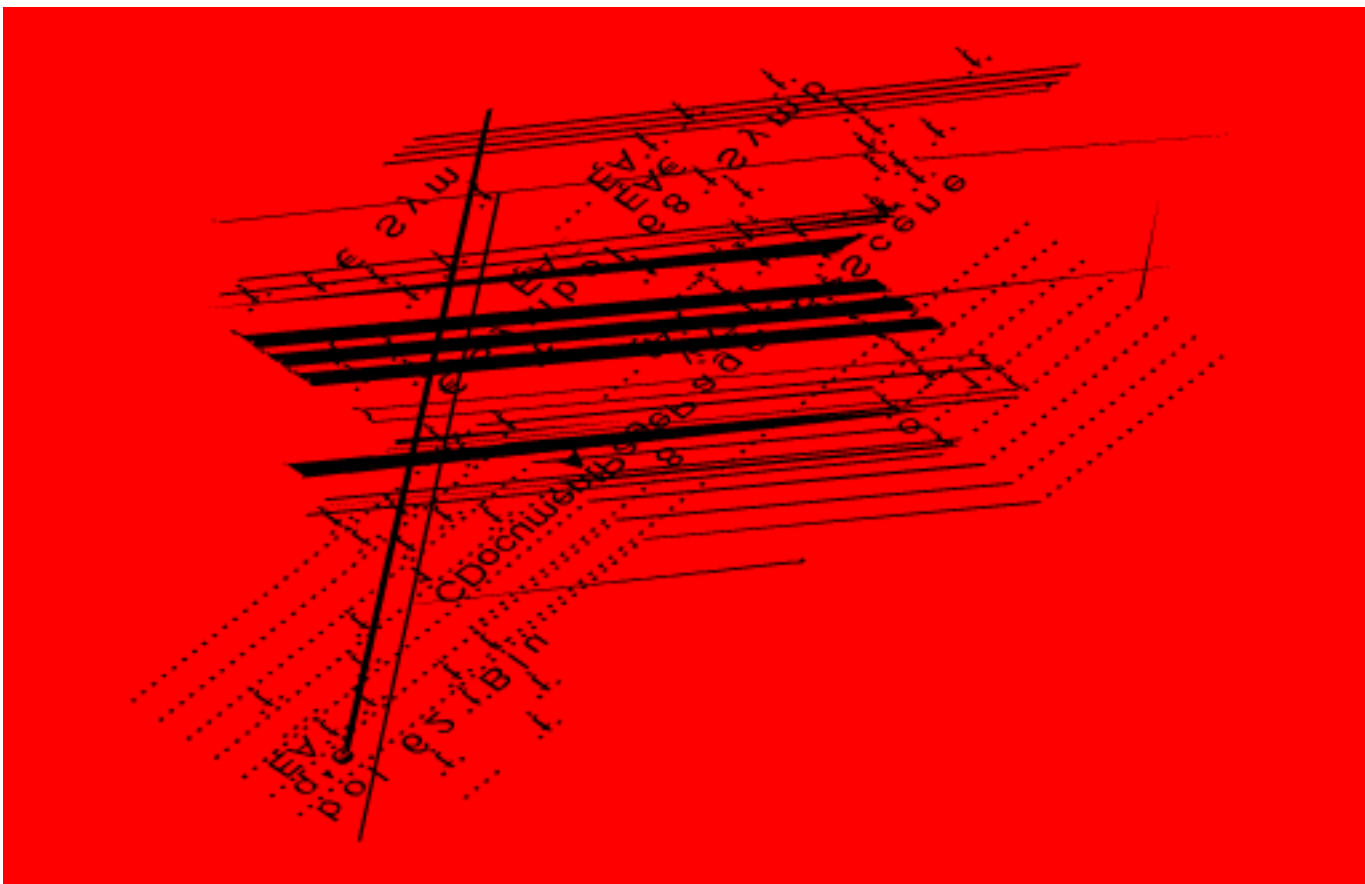
25 Idem: *Krach giełdy olejowej*, [bromboxy.proarte.net.pl](http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/krach_gieldy_olejowej.html), http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/krach_gieldy_olejowej.html, April 2009.

in lines of equal length, moving downwards across the screen. The text is interspersed with a few recognisable words, such as *feebly*, *tender*, or *CRASH*, and sequences of letters that resemble Polish words but do not mean anything, e.g. “*ścięgnościkawadydarzeń*” or “*tłkły*”. The whole is nothing more than a machine-generated jabber, resembling computer program code opened by the wrong viewer. The resemblances to Polish are there to reinforce the expectation that the character-generating process will lead to the emergence of some kind of meaning. However, the expectation is not satisfied.

When the text-generating process finishes, a slowly rotating, two layered construction of letters, dashes and dots appears on the screen. This spatial structure, which seems to be an answer to the reader’s effort to understand the poem as a whole, is the quintessence of unintelligibility and distortion. Since it consists of two layers, it seems to reveal the process of its own creation. As the creator filled the rows with letters and dots, forming a defective text, the letters became distorted into a mirror image of themselves. This deformed layer is in fact a deconstructed textuality, an imitation of a poem.



A
screenshot
from “An
Oil Market
Crash” by
Roman
Bromboszcz

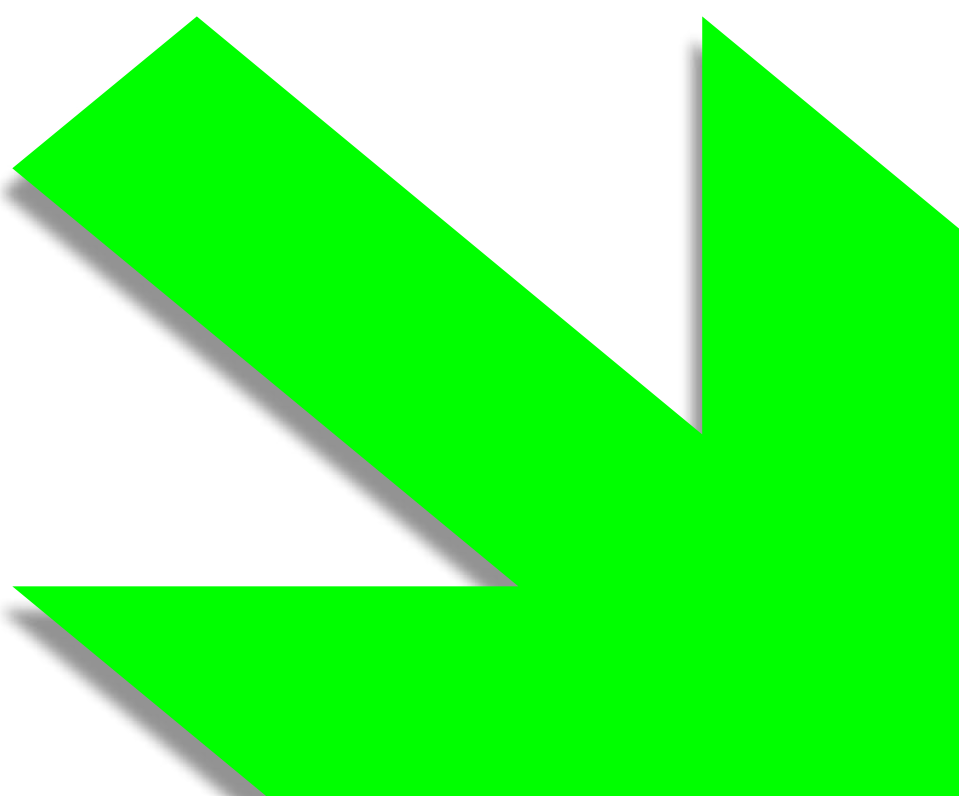


The second layer is comprised of parallel lines, running at an angle towards the text. Those lines make the text even less legible and create the impression that it is a three-dimensional object. The structure, which rotates constantly, can be approached from multiple perspectives. Nevertheless, it is impossible to look at it from the opposite side, overstep and ignore the lines distorting the text. In this situation the text, as well as the whole poem, ceases to be a linguistic or graphical sign because it refuses to mean anything. It can only be understood as an outcome of certain actions performed mechanically on lines and letters²⁶. The poem criticizes the idea of a literary work as a carefully designed meaningful structure and challenges the possibility of interpretation of automatically generated texts.

The Perfokarta poets who consciously act against clarity and

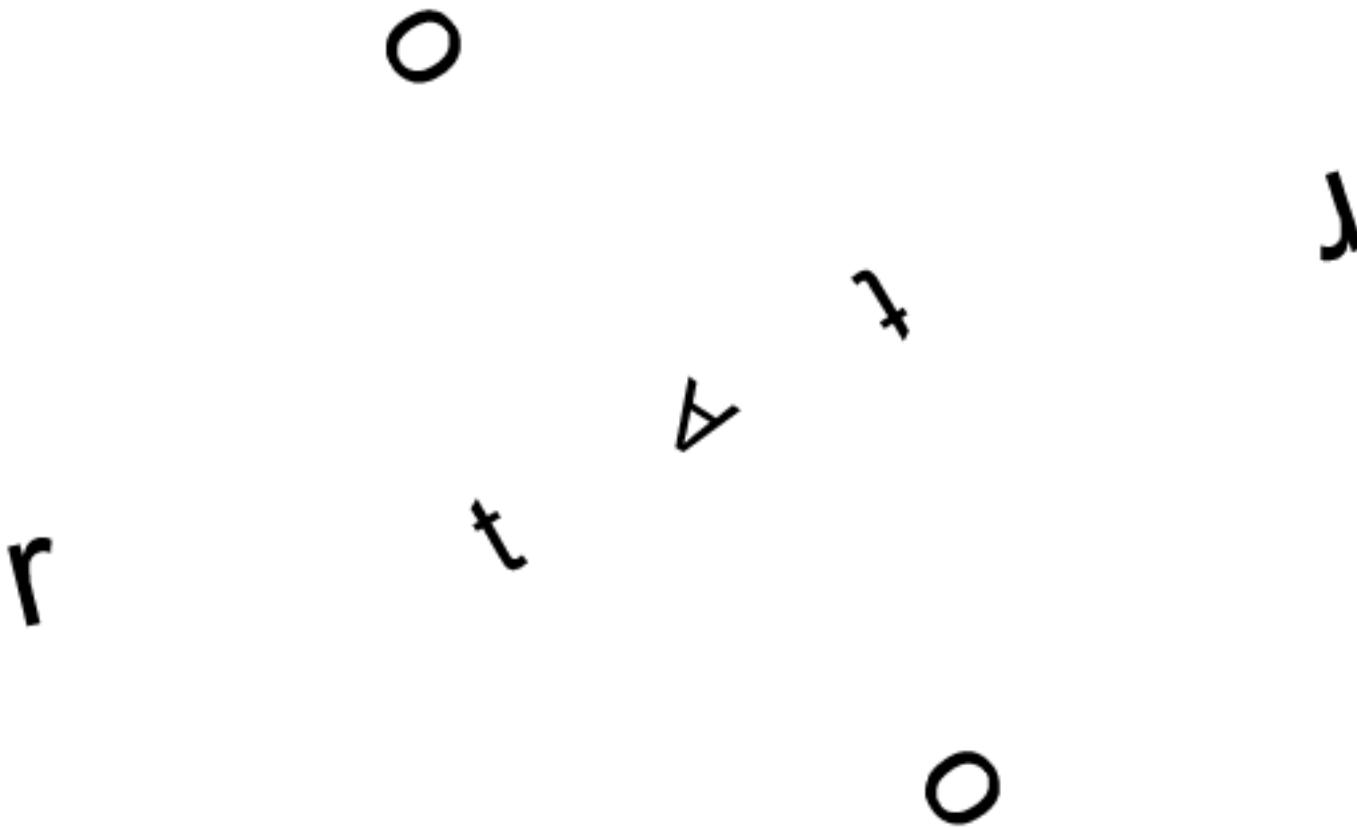
²⁶ These operations can be compared with drawing patterns e.g. during a prolonged phone call or a boring lecture. We usually begin with putting a simple figure on the margin, and then fill up the space of the page gradually, as the conversation continues. The picture evolves without a general plan or meaning.

intelligibility of language frequently draw their inspiration from lettrism, as well as visual and concrete poetry. Destroying the text often involves breaking down linguistic structures (usually words) into components (letters) that become the object of transformation in time and space, thus disrupting the linear order of the text. The examples include *rotator*²⁷ and *totem*²⁸ by Bromboszcz. In these poems the letters and their configurations move across the screen in different directions, to some degree determined by the reader. In *krzyknik*²⁹ (*clamation*) by the same author it is an exclamation mark that is broken into two parts, and in *spawy* (*welds*)³⁰ each letter is cut in two. *Rotator* and *spawy* constitute model examples of concretism. The letters as moving objects create a kinetic image whose meaning exactly matches the meaning of the destroyed word. In this way the structure of the sign changes entirely. Usually a word refers to an absent object. In contrast, here the simulated object refers to a deconstructed word.



A
screenshot
from
“Rotator”
by Roman
Bromboszcz

27 R. Bromboszcz, *rotator*: <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/rotator.html>.
28 Idem, *totem*, <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/totem.html>.
29 Idem, *krzyknik*: <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/krzyknik.html>.
30 Idem, *spawy*: <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/spawy.html>.



The connection between the destruction of language and visual or sound poetry was well described by Lionel Kearns, one of the Canadian poets using electronic media. According to him, the essence of destruction is to free the word of its reference, which makes it possible for the author or the reader to replace it with a new reference:

“if one messes around enough with the physical form of language (either spoken or written), eventually you get to the point where it (the language) drops its load of conventional reference. When this happens you no longer have language because (by definition) language must have reference. Right on that edge, where language begins to move into either music or visual art--that is the place where sound and visual poetry start to occur”³¹;

“I think the key term here is “conventional”. When the agreed upon references fall away from the form, the poet (or the

31 Fragments of texts by Lionel Kearns (in:) J. Andrews, *On Lionel Kearns. A binary meditation on the work of a pioneering Canadian poet contemplating digital poetics from the early sixties to the present*, www.vispo.com, <http://www.vispo.com/kearns/indexenglish.htm> (kearnsframeset).

reader or the audience) has a chance to hang other pieces of reference on it in place of what was there before. (...) We hear a piece of instrumental music at a certain moment, and thereafter associate that piece with what was going on for us at that moment. We hang our own personal reference on it"³².

In electronic poetry the new relationships that substitute the conventional references are usually facilitated by the algorithm. A popular practice in Polish cybertext poetry is to program the movement of individual letters or sets of letters, as in *23.59.59* by Bromboszcz³³ or *Meditation No 4* by Wilmański³⁴. The signifying pieces are devoid of meaning but they gain visual and sound features instead. Other poems such as *Whirlpool from Liverpool*³⁵ or *krytyka chleba, gwiazd i kamienia (wieczne demo) (criticism on bread, stars and stone (eternal demo))* by Podgórn³⁶, connect the text, the sound and the image within a complex mechanism. The connections that replace the meaning are based on physical proximity or causality and do not support the notion of a harmonious whole. To the contrary, they seem to exemplify the deconstruction of language. It can be seen in *Whirlpool from Liverpool*, especially when contrasted with *Nio* by Jim Andrews³⁷. Both pieces are based on a visual pattern that determines the placement of letters, syllables or phrases. In the poem by Podgórn the layout is that of a keyboard, while in *Nio*

32 Op. cit., (lionelportrait2).

33 R. Bromboszcz, *23.59.59*: <<http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/23.59.59.html>>.

34 T. Wilmański, *Meditation No 4* (2004) (in:) "Techsty" 20008, 5 <<http://techsty.art.pl/magazyn/magazyn5/start.html>>.

35 Ł. Podgórn, *Whirlpool from Liverpool* (in:) "Techsty" 20008, 5 <<http://techsty.art.pl/magazyn/magazyn5/wfl/wfl.html>>.

36 Idem: *krytyka chleba, gwiazd, kamienia (wieczne demo)* (in:) „Techsty” 20008, 5 <<http://techsty.art.pl/magazyn/magazyn5/kcgk/kckg.html>>.

37 J. Andrews, *Nio*: <www.vispo.com, 2001, <<http://www.vispo.com/nio/index.htm>>.

it is that of a clock, where different letters or their combinations replace the hours. In both works, the letters are paired with sound patterns repeated as long as the corresponding letter key is active.

In *Whirlpool from Liverpool* these are the recordings of words, phrases or syllables, made deliberately in poor quality and with audible interferences. These textual fragments include non-existent words, such as “a grananan”, derived probably from the neighbouring “anagram” and “gram”. The disruptions and distortions create an impression that the words, as observed and heard, have been interfered with and transformed by a machine. The same conclusion can be drawn from the keyboard layout and from the presence of phrases, syllables and neologisms that do not make sense either apart or together. However, the poem is not absolutely incongruous. It can be easily seen that most of the linguistic hybrids have been created by mechanical operations on existing words and neologisms and phrases present in the poem. This seems true for a number of groups, such as: “on the other” and “on the other side”, “there is moat” and “there is heart”, “anagram of sodium”, “anagram of ferrum” and “anagram of mercury”, as well as “gram”, “grananan of a monkey” and “anagrammarine rama”. This way Podgórní makes an ironic comment on traditional poetry, where orchestration and parallelisms are popular artistic techniques.

To the contrary, in *Nio* the sounds are clear, rhythmical, and nice melodies produced by a person who sings, whistles or murmurs letters and their combinations. Not all combinations

of sounds are allowed: when certain buttons are pressed, the system automatically disables some other. This does not happen in the poem by Podgórní, where the reader is absolutely free to mix the sounds even if the results are unpleasant and incomprehensible. Thus, the idea of harmony as a poetic imperative is challenged. This very difference between *Nio* and *Whirlpool from Liverpool* reveals the main concepts standing behind these two pieces. The goal of the former is to dismantle the text in order to create a multimodal and synaesthetic harmony, while the goal of the latter is to deconstruct textuality and affirm the distance between the human and his/her language.

The reader is asked for destructive practices also in *krytyka chleba, gwiazd i kamienia (wieczne demo)* by Podgórní. The instruction states explicitly that “the objects are to be clicked, the objects are to be dragged and dropped, the objects are to be tamed, the objects are to be invaded at”³⁸. The reader is offered a multimodal space, where the letters are objects and may be manipulated. Podgórní’s work is a colourful, moving surface, the basic unit of which is a square. The behavior of the objects is unknown to the user and the interaction appears to be a struggle to master the system: the reader is trying to force the poem to reveal sense and rules of operation, so that the interaction could become a victorious game. However, the system as a whole seems too complex to be understood. Regularities may be observed only in some parts or aspects of the poems. For instance, eleven manipulable squares with letters and symbols generate predictable sounds when

38 **Ł. Podgórní**, op. cit., translation E.B. The mistake is deliberate, in order to express the meaning of the Polish word “najeżdżać”.

placed in certain areas of the screen. The reader tries to use the pieces to influence the rest of the system, but it does not prove effective. In some aspects, the behavior of the surface is regular, e.g. a rapid invasion of colourful squares repeats cyclically, but the whole logic of transformation remains obscure. The interaction changes into chaotic manipulation with squares, pressing random keyboard keys and helpless clicking all over the screen. This way the reader interferes with the system, introducing even more disruption and confusion, instead of creating anything sensible. The promise of destruction and freeing the reader from the restrictions of language is being fulfilled on two levels. Firstly, the poem presents a deconstructed and transformed signification system, in which the reference has been replaced with a complex kinetic logic. Secondly, the reader's obligation to find or create sense is suspended, which satisfies the postulate by David Melnick, cited in the beginning of this article.

Conclusion

The idea of destruction of textuality and meaning is an important topic in Polish electronic literature. The authors draw heavily on the European avantgarde tradition, but at the same time parallels may be seen with American poetry, including that of L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E group. The common practice of the "destructive current" is to free the signifier from the linguistic system and employ it within an arbitrary mechanism presented to the reader. His interactive involvement leads to further disintegration, as all the resemblances of the work to known texts are nothing more than false clues. As they are limited to the surface of the

signifier, their identification and interpretation does not lead to understanding. The sense of the works seems to be the experience of destruction.

At the same time, as it has been mentioned earlier, the “destructive current” of e-poetry reveals an important link with the concept of deconstruction³⁹. The common idea is to detach the word from its meaning and focus the attention of the reader on the materiality and rhetoric of the text. It allows to reveal the ambiguity and preconceptions that determine the referential aspect of language⁴⁰. Electronic poetry achieves a similar goal by using kinetic or visual displacements that destroy the textual layer of the poem, making it practically illegible. The reading process does not lead to global signification and finally the reader is forced to abandon the idea of discovering or imposing a single meaning on the text. Instead, the encounter with the work reveals a number of figurative structures, such as parallelisms, ellipses, anagrams, created by mechanical operations on the medium. The essence of this kind of e-literature is an ironic play with the materiality of the signifier that produces, questions and constantly redefines the relationship between a word or text and its meaning.

39 I call the whole trend in e-poetry “the destructive current” and not the “deconstructive current” because there is no evidence that it has been inspired by deconstruction. Neither does any poet explicitly reference deconstruction in theoretical works or manifestos. However, if deconstruction is understood as a critical method of reading and an attitude towards language and literature, then “the destructive current” seems to share many of its assumptions. It must also be noted here that “destruction” in e-poetry does not imply an absolute negation or annihilation of textuality but a playful substitution of existing linguistic and literary structures by alternative, temporary constructions based on mechanical operations performed by the author or by the reader.

40 **M. P. Markowski**, *Dekonstrukcja* (in:) A. Burzyńska, M. P. Markowski, *Teorie literatury XX wieku. Podręcznik*, Kraków 2006, pp. 359-380.

The “destructive current” within electronic literature has not yet been fully understood and appreciated within literary studies. It seems that one of the main reasons has been the methodology that could not fully explain the sense of these works. Even the notions of aporia and epiphany in Aarseth’s sense too often refer to the structural completeness and incompleteness on the purely textual level: the former is usually nothing more than a roadblock in a game or a missing part of a story, whereas the latter allows to overcome the incongruence and arrive at an acceptable whole⁴¹. Therefore the experience of destruction or deconstruction is not a valid epiphany, especially if the reader seeks the opposite.

How to explain or justify this fundamental flaw in the cybertext structure?

The problem has been noticed by Aarseth in his account of the reading of *The Speaking Clock* by John Cayley⁴². The encounter with this peculiar cybertext raises more questions than answers and in fact does not bring any obvious epiphany, apart from the notion that the topic of the work is the “profound enigma” of time and experience. Aarseth seems to suggest that the aporetic nature of the work represents or investigates a certain aspect of existence. As a reader, he arrives at a peculiar kind of epiphany by finding such an interpretation of the work that allows him to attribute sense to the incongruent cybertextual sequence.

41 **E. Aarseth**: *Cybertext. Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*, Baltimore 1997, pp. 91-92; *Aporia and Epiphany in “Doom” and “The Speaking Clock”*. *The Temporality of Ergodic Art* (in:) *Cyberspace Textuality. Computer Technology and Literary Theory* (red.) M.-L. Ryan, Bloomington, 1999, p. 38.

42 Op. cit., p. 40.

Referring primarily to the study of textual media in terms of cybertextual mechanics, Aarseth's theory focuses on the materiality of the text and is not meant to explore the meaning-making process. The "destructive current" seems to need a refined approach that allows to place the problem in a broader context in order to understand the clash between the reader's expectations and the experience of reading. This should allow to pinpoint the double nature of aporia. Firstly, being an inherent part of the cybertextual process as presented by Aarseth, each aporia engages the reader in the role of the operator, who is actively trying to overcome it. Secondly, an aporia is always rooted in certain preconceptions of the reader concerning language and literature.

The meaning-making process and the behaviour of the reader depends on these preconceptions, which are sometimes deliberately played with or undermined during the reading.

Consequently, the aporetic-epiphanic process may be described in the light of promise and desire. This view shifts the focus to the reader as an active and motivated subject who responds to the promises made by the cybertext. The textual layer of "destructive poetry" activates two different kinds of reader motivation. On the one hand, by calling themselves literature, the works activate the reader's quest for meaning, based on a certain horizon of expectations. On the other hand, theoretical manifestos and other signals, such as the lack of title in *AE*, claim exactly the opposite: the referential function of the text is to be abandoned. The former promise

lures the reader into the cybertext and drives forward the interaction, whereas the latter explains the real function of the work. This function is to undermine the reader's expectations and reading habits, freeing him/her from the imperative to understand and provide him/her with the experience of textuality in process, where the signification is being created, destroyed and transformed. A cybertextual literary work is no longer supposed to be a masterpiece, a representation or even a coherent whole. Instead, it becomes an invitation to an interactive process of play against language⁴³. However, in the end the idea of destruction and creative freedom is also no more than a promise, matching the reader's desire and leading him into the game. The game will last as long as the reader's hope to fulfil this desire through the movement of the signifier, or his/her belief that the promise is actually being fulfilled.

The fragment comes from: "The Destruction of Text in Polish E-Literature. AE by Robert Szczerbowski and Electronic Poetry by Perfokarta". First published: "CyberText Yearbook", 2010: <http://cybertext.hum.jyu.fi/index.php?browsebook=7>

⁴³ **K. Hayles:** *The Time of Digital Poetry: From Object to Event* (in:) *New Media Poetics. Contexts, Technotexts and Theories* (red.) A. Morris, T. Swiss, Cambridge MA, 2006, p. 181.

ROMAN BROMBOSZCZ

**CYBERNETIC
POEM —
SPECTRA AND
ALLIANCES**

A cybernetic poem is defined by two criteria: technical and ideological. The former are concerned with poem structure and performance. The latter are concerned with the respected and postulated values. Satisfying technical criteria does not have to go hand in hand with satisfying ideological ones and vice versa.

Technical criteria are related to social criticism and issues such as power and control by means of electronics.

Technical criteria are roughly similar to what would be expected from hypertext, ergodic literature and cybertext – as presented by Aarseth.

Cybernetics has been treated as a conceptual resource

for cybernetic poetry. With this in view, forms such as hypertext, ergodic literature and cybertext should be considered cybernetic in structure. Therefore, the structure has to be the basic link between a cybernetic poem and, what we call for the sake of comparison, "cyber-literature".

Both these elements aim to imitate a machine. What is meant, however, is not seeking similarities in shape and in other elements that manifest themselves through our sensory perception, but making machine functions practical. Fascination with the potential involved in the lives of artificial organisms is therefore the primary motive.

These are sometimes imperfect beings, going through the net labyrinth

How much do neolinguistic and cybernetic works share? The answer to this question can no longer be evaded by the meanings that used to be assigned as either "neolinguistic" or "cybernetic". If we were to expect only technical fulfillment from cybernetic poetry, we would find similarities in segmenting a poem (e.g. poems by R. Misiewicz in *Gada!zabić?*, "Piąty element to fikcja" by M. Cyranowicz, "pracownia futer (wieczny szkic)"⁴⁴ by Ł. Podgórní, and "Maszyna do czasowników" by Sz. Kopyta) that would lead, with the use of a keyboard, to the achievement of quite definite ("prototyp03"⁴⁵) and infinite ("prototyp01"⁴⁶) ergodicity. As for criticism, neolinguists are no match for cybernetic

44 <http://szafranchinche.ovh.org/prc.html>

45 <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/prototyp03.html>

46 <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/prototyp01.html>

poets who address political issues directly without resort to deconstructing a performance or destructing classical aesthetic categories. Competence in criticism and inventiveness in technology are not easily reconcilable. Therefore, combining these two is considered a virtue among cybernetic poets. Placing a high value on energy and information in real systems is treason against both cyber-literature and neolinguisism.

Insurmountable boundaries between life and art, as well as between social practice and work, may be considered contributory to the ontological distinction. Cybernetics shapes both life and work. The category of "homeostasis" is useful in describing life as an ontogenetic and phylogenetic process. Not without reason was the issue of homeostasis addressed by Norbert Wiener. He compared the communal stability of primitive cultures to a homeostat, whose efficiency cannot be experienced in the era of mass media. Not only have communities joined in the global communication system, but also the scope of validity of statements and established rules such as norms have changed. In the world of mass media, indicated objects become underspecified and experienced transversally.

Homeostat, as a challenge for a cybernetic poem, provides a pattern that is also followed by the imitators of electric sheep and the like. One feature of computer art is brought to light by the randomness of Ashby's homeostat, namely not making the changes conditional in the process that goes beyond human experience. Thinking of homeostat as a tool of poetic expression generates a structure whose elements engage in an unwarranted dialogue that is maintained within

a certain denseness range and skips from one probability to another. Discontinuity is both a challenge for the designer and a perceptual requirement of being able to experience such a work of art.

Further reading:

E. Aarseth, *Sample Chapter from Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*. (<http://www.hf.uib.no/cybertext/Ergodic.html>)

W. R. Ashby, *An Introduction to Cybernetics*, Chapman & Hall, London 1957.

P. Koziół, M. Cyranowicz, *Gada!zabić?. Pa(n)tologia neolingwizmu*, Staromiejski Dom Kultury, Warszawa 2005.

N. Wiener, *Cybernetics: Or the Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*, (2nd edition), MIT Press, Cambridge 1965.

TRANSLATION:
MARCIN PIŃKOWSKI

First published:

<<http://perfokarta.net/theory/cybernetic.poem.-.spectra.and.alliances.html>>



**Roman
Bromboszcz
s.c.r.a.t.c.h.**



BREAD RESOLUTION MANIFESTO V. 1.8

The free

zing of the text is

owed to paper – the function of the Internet is
interaction and movement>>>

R3M3D7>>>*We send a request* for literary **bugs, malware, spam!**

Server errors become our blunders

€µíĐyžňĐä xťÍ7Ůř#Ć#§

2i#\$ppz’”4*r**h**#aÚGa‘#**b**,üiC3Čťč:ĚŁsd«ŞŮĚJ‘Á#mâžl’#ń+L’Šž#×#ŁÎ

The everpresent **wi-fi**, like God, designs our actions, blinking
with all the saint diÓdes.

We believe, we’ll be redeemed by **cackling code** and
unwanted mail. Poetry as disk space: (wi n}Lubq^ land
promised | by Ca | | | | iope’s cursors. To seize it, we’ll
create a golden **keygen to culture**, which we will copy and
put under the doormats of all the buildings in the world.

#•en#:ô>ÝđzóJ2ŁR@Öşş# HĐu»Č!{%U#HZ#Íůđ#ç#ăúđ=Est’ń•x
|)46Zb

‘ş,%Í”á`ś`#,Ś1xŽ9Ç×fRB/Č#LĚřŽál#ZÓ´Ž#č`#α”Öô!Üq,J’x
Tăc#’ >#K×ô’ xŁN»qvŠ#ś#ęǻăú{WťŠ,©t{Ům”–Žf{inĆ™â#

ó#>ÉćÓă8#<E\$Fd’

ă8#<

Publishers, booksellers, printers – **your milch cow is dying!**

We’ve seen rotten piles of paper () () () () () () ()

kept at the livestock markets.

We’ve seen senselessly discounted volumes,

lingering on the shelves of shops with second-hand clothes.

ś#ęǻđ

Paper is ending, no sense in unfolding another reel! Let's digitalize the bowels of libraries and set fire to them, so we can sit in the warmth of the flames and hatch **the eggs of new procedures** and **digital mutants** feeding on **code**,

and let us scatter the ashes around the system folders, or snort them!

Ä 1 Ä 1 Ä0#R@0!

Publishers, book\$ellers, printers!

Frozen in the aisles of the old medium, which leans on cracked columns of verses and paragraphs: topped with a leaky thatch of pages – you've managed to miss the fires and the horsemen of the application, approaching on the information superhighway, who are now knocking on your grubby stained-glass windows – (o! t) hey'll shatter it, heralding

α<ry> {bdŽÂ ›©®·q·n%oÉxÇ,Öα´.°'Ű C## +

[illegible]

#####Ä##

CAUTION! Post-paper Phari\$ees, running from the falling temples, move all of the legal and economic pestilence plaguing their old territories to the Internet.

To the corporate and e-publishing subjects that wish to imprison culture in the golden cage of DRM, we kindly recommend:

>>Pi\$\$ off! <<

)

nBi#oÜ*0l>y~»ñ#.ó°VwerereăŮ_#üŤH

((“Đ=»#v×#E°šň#lę®H“¶c“.#öä#VE#"μ~#KćŁhÓ; äN>

Greediness will bring us to bankruptcy –

using our keygen, we'll crush all of the protections

and mental barriers,

anyway, and then we'll start to draw from culture, with gigabytes, anything we need!

Try to arrest the wireless world!

>:/

For its seed to bear new fruit, culture must become **shameless** and **commonly available**, like a whore, giving it to any interested passer-by.

And so we renounce our dignity. Some rights reserved.

We announce a virtualization of our bowels and brains –

we pass all of them to **the torrent-making institutions**, which will pick up the tastiest bits, and delete the rest from their disks.

We'll be everywhere! The unlimited number of relations with the user will only be determined by the capacity of the network connection!

We have deep throats. We give you all of them.

Don't wear a condom.

(We wouldn't want the digital medium to become our fetish, though.

Aware of the trap that we can fall into, we plan to cynically use every virginal carrier of culture.

We await the coming of the **bioliterature**.)

#####T#####

#U#####\$#\$#####

#####F#####

#N#####/#####%#####

#####E#####) #####:

#:#####I#P#####

The naked, unarmed poetic word
demands to be electrocuted, which we happily do.

Enough with useless testimonies and recordings of struggles
with personal **processors**

(overloaded with tradition,
feeling,

existential dilemma and
undigested contemporaneity;

(Íp/feŽ\$Â3Ť.Cqq~N (Íp/
feŽ\$Â3Ť.Cqq~N\$ŧ# GÜ«€4écXÓksw,Ŭs#ý>7±úŤ: ~©¶ä, #ĂŚx#—

choking on their own blue tongues

of programming

poetic tokens “racing” for dry laurels*

and cash.

* let’s roll them into a joint and

smoke them!

Ř) <§¶d<ň\Gů5 po,#Ž\$Ž „#9#÷2

Google Translate can say more about language and the world than many a Smith and Jones! **Print screen** for a new stylistic measure! **Cleverbot for president!** instead of chaste quote – rape through **repost!**

The expiration of the group license for the rapidly corroding engine of poetry inclines us to **immediately update its operation system**. The installation program **XXI_century.rar** has been downloading for 11 years, we are ready to unpack and launch it.

Let's format ourselves:

There are no authors and readers – there are **manufacturers and users**.

There are no texts – there are **programs, objects, pseudocodes** and **web performances**:

It's high time to use the potential of **chats, social network services** and **network videophones**. They will be our literary cafés.

*You don't say subject, but **avatar**. No presented world, but **simulation!***

še~1I¶Äf0)Ęě1ÚoÁ5više~1I¶Äf0)Ęě1ÚoÁ5više~1I¶Äf0)
Ęě1ÚoÁ5više~1I¶Äf0)Ęě1ÚoÁ

Lately, culture has given birth to two emblematic figures that need to be worshiped.

Those are: **Programmer** and **DJ**.

Let's remix anything that moves (not)! Recycling of existing content is a superb way for active and satisfying interaction with tradition.

Word | Image | Sound | Movement | Interaction

– before those idols: fastened to a common **Intermedial Core**: let us kneel on colorful carpets, woven from **algorithms, hypertexts, defects, remixes, games** and **noises**

#####^b #b (# >R! €#, Ä0 #

*@**

Will the cyborgs, which we ~~soon~~ are right now ~~we'll~~ becoming, still need poetic trinkets, *describing scabs in the crook of the arm and outrolled lassies*⁴⁷? **Wouldn't** the cyborgs rather peop | | | *e don't turn off their stoves, why waste mFtchFs*⁴⁸. | | | hear about our heroic (?) march from the analogue era ; A`\$ŘqÚŮ#M+fŇÄg into the digital one; about the concurrent social, moral and mental changes, sponsored by the Internet? Is a unit equipped with a full body prosthesis interested in divagations about out temporary, organic jars (containing ourselves) and their parameters, such us gender and age? *** And so, all that's left to us **is spinning elegiac spam, desperately trampling down the signal, sniveling into the communication channels.** #####
#####

**@*

LET THERE BE NEW INTERFACES, LET THE CONTENT
OF DATABASES GROW!

LET THE IP ADDRESSES CONGEAL AND DOMAINS FADE!

LET THERE BE NEW INTERFACES, LET THE CONTENT
OF DATABASES GROW!

LET THE IP ADDRESSES CONGEAL AND DOMAINS FADE!

Poetry. Poetry.

Poetry?

Nope! Chuck Testa!

Poetry?

Nope! Chuck Testa!

Chuck Testa!

Chuck Testa! Chuck Testa!

TEXT PRODUCED BY:

LESZEK ONAK

ŁUKASZ PODGÓRNI

SIGNED BY:

ROMAN BROMBOSZCZ

PIOTR PULDZIAN PŁUCIENNICZAK

TOMASZ PUŁKA

TRANSLATION BY:

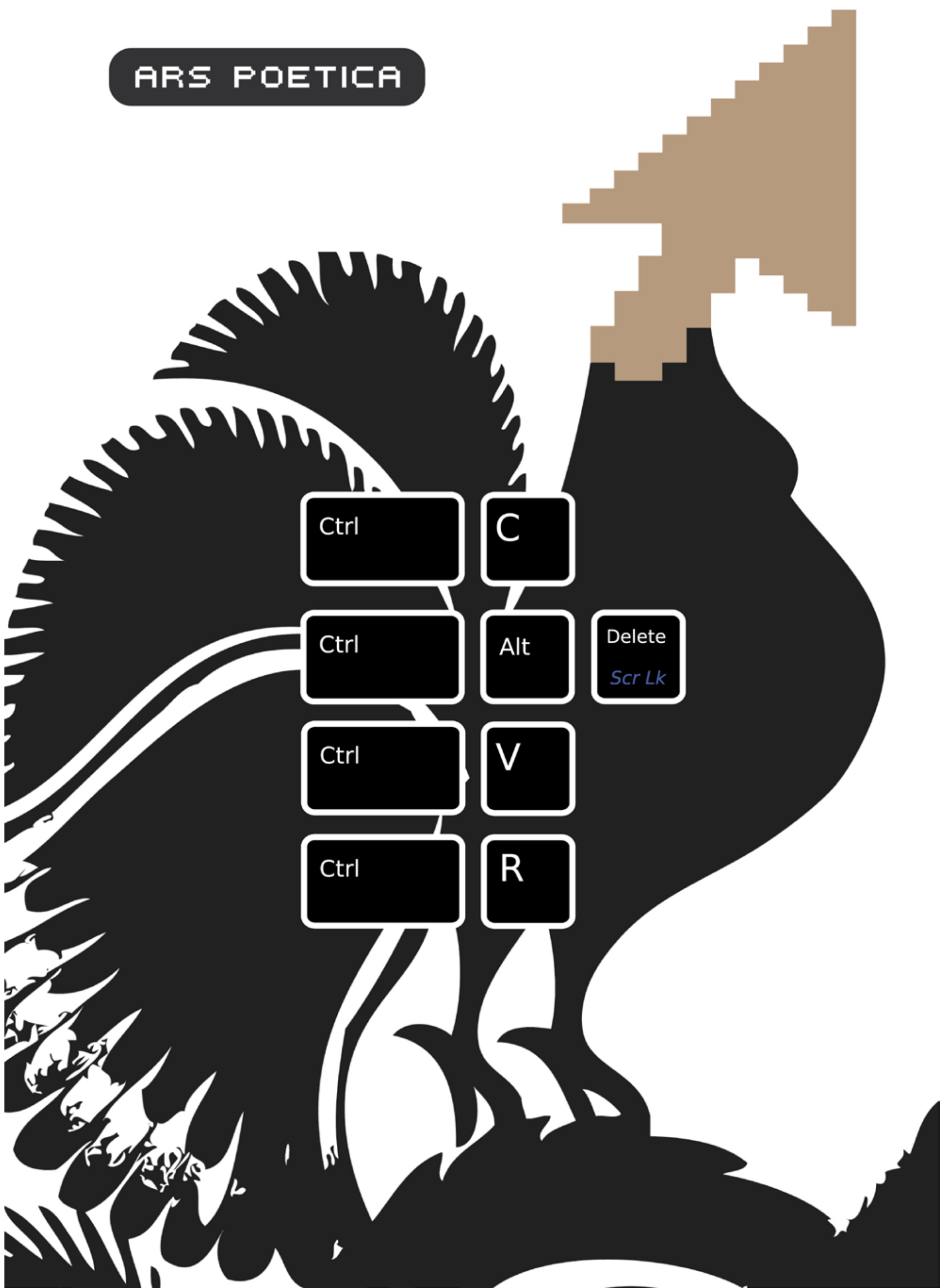
EWA BOMBA



Leszek Onak & Łukasz Podgórni, "The Art of Trolling", performance by
Rozdzielczość Chleba - Klub Migawka, Kraków 2011 (fot. Marcin Ryczek)



ARS POETICA



ŁUKASZ PODGÓRNI

CYBERNETIC POETRY IN THE CONTEXT OF LUDODOLOGY

In *Self-description*¹, written in the early days of cybernetic poets' activity, we can read, "Cybernetic poetry is the language game whose goal is to change some of the deep-rooted beliefs reflected in the automatism of social judgments". If you look closely at the works shown on bromboxy² and szafranchinche³ websites, it becomes clear that the "language game" is no longer only poetic wordplay, a blend of different poetics and literary conventions, or the modification of existing diction by means of cybernetic tools (shift, noise generator). The literary quality of these works can usually be found in the background ("Echem"⁴) or not at all ("mainna.beta"⁵). Therefore, these are not examples of what we traditionally understand as the "language game", but a form of contest – "a kind of performance that takes place on a computer screen"⁶. It is a game where language and meaning, in its broad sense, are at stake and the reader, or rather the user, through a series of (non-) specific actions, may "win" them – obtain

1_ *Cybernetics poetry – self-description*, <http://perfokarta.net/root/self-description.html>

2_ <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/>

3_ <http://szafranchinche.ovh.org/>

4_ **R. Bromboszcz**, *Echem*: <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/echem/echem.html>

5_ **Ł. Podgórn**i, *mainna.beta*: <http://szafranchinche.ovh.org/mainna.html>

6_ A term proposed by M. Pisarski, *Poetry Plugged In. On Cybernetic Poetry*: <http://perfokarta.net/theory/poetry.plugged.in..on.cybernetic.poetry.html>

them from superimposed layers: auditory, visual and literary. The experience of synesthesia is another form of a user's potential "victory".

Already at the first encounter with these works, it becomes clear that the language and tools used to describe literary works are of no use here, hence my attempt at looking at them from the perspective of ludology.

Ludology as the study of computer games is concerned with their two elements that cannot be transposed on other areas of cultural activity, namely the phenomenon of agency and simulation.

About the former, M. Mateas writes: "(it) is the feeling of empowerment that comes from being able to take actions in the world whose effects relate to the player's intention". It is also important to meet some of the player's expectations, "If, in manipulating the interface elements, players do have an effect on the world, but they are not the effects that the players intended (...), then there is no agency"⁷. In the case of R. Bromboszcz's digital works and the ones I put on my blog, it is impossible to acknowledge the presence or absence of agency for two reasons.

Firstly, it happens that the interface in these works is either not visible at first glance (the above-mentioned "Echem") or is only partly visible ("artykulator"⁸). The reader, whether or not able to communicate with the object (detect the

7_ **M. Mateas**, *A Preliminary Poetics for Interactive Drama and Games*, "Digital Creativity", vol. 12, No. 3, 2001, pp. 140-152. <http://www.soe.ucsc.edu/~michaelm/publications/mateas-dc-2001.pdf>

8_ **R. Bromboszcz**, *artykulator*: <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/artykulator/artykulator.html>

interface), becomes active and enters the game by getting into the process of creating (i.e. “winning”) meanings, or is just a witness to auditory and visual events. Therefore, when there is no interaction, there is no agency, either. Secondly, a player’s satisfaction is greatly dependent on his or her own ingenuity, curiosity and effort put into the creation of the work. Bromboszcz’s “four.values”⁹ is a good example. This particular work will remain a black, silent chart unless the reader undertakes some action. With the click of a mouse, it can be transformed into a four-colour pattern producing four different sounds, the occurrence and order of which is coupled – on a seemingly absurd basis – with the visual element. As the author himself writes, “the first contact, no matter how long and intense, will inevitably be only ‘one fourth’” since in every performance (opening the file where the work is saved), only one out of four different sound sets is selected.

Cybernetic poetry – the kind that is based on the digital environment – is not usually aimed at meeting a “player’s” expectations when it comes to the way of communicating or controlling the electronic poem, and especially when it comes to the meaning and form, which – by steering and synthesizing particular units of meaning (audiovisual loops) as one goes along – are tried to be “won”. A firm conviction that all forms of automatism in interpreting and judging art should be countered entails a unique structure of these poems, which is manifested, among other things, in making a deliberate use of faulty code fragments or in exposing software defects (“a_p_o”¹⁰). Such actions are aimed at

9_R. Bromboszcz, *four.values*:
<[http://labela.perfokarta.net/
roman_bromboszcz/four_values/
four_values_pl.php](http://labela.perfokarta.net/roman_bromboszcz/four_values/four_values_pl.php)>

10_R. Bromboszcz, *a_p_o*:
<[http://bromboxy.proarte.net.
pl/a_p_o/a_p_o.html](http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/a_p_o/a_p_o.html)>

three things: firstly, at the criticism of electronic media and therefore social criticism; secondly, at disrupting, restructuring or testing language (e.g. a poetic one) in a “hostile” environment; thirdly, at coercing the user into discontinuity that is characteristic of homeostat randomly seeking a new structure capable of providing stability. Discontinuity is understood here as the ability to move into different areas of probability and meaning when the previous perception mechanisms are no longer effective.

In his *I Fought the Law: Transgressive Play and the Implied Player*, E. Aarseth writes about two user models. The implied player is derived from the implied (ideal) reader, who, according to Wolfgang Iser, “embodies all those predispositions necessary for a literary work to exercise its effect”¹¹. Here, the implied player, following instructions and rules closely as well as obediently playing the role planned in the program, has been compared with a transgressive player. “Games are machines that sometimes allow their players to do unexpected things, often just because these actions are not explicitly forbidden”¹². The transgressive player tracks down and adapts glitches to his or her own use, and at the same time gives up all the paths and scenarios that were planned for him or her. The aim of such actions is to rebel against the tyranny of the game, “to regain a sense of identity and uniqueness through the mechanisms of the game itself”¹³, because it is this tyranny that is, as H. G. Gadamer states, “the real subject” as long as the implied player does not change the status to transgressive player.

11_ As cited in E. Aarseth, *I Fought the Law: Transgressive Play and the Implied Player*, p. 132. <<http://www.digra.org/dl/db/07313.03489.pdf>>

12_Idem.

13_ As cited in E. Aarseth.

When it comes to cybernetic poetry (the digital one and the one where paper or a text file is the medium), the apparently impassable boundaries between the two aforementioned types are being blurred. In some cases, you could even treat the implied and the transgressive player as one. The ideal user of this work is a subject that is either free from or struggling with the “real” subject of the game (text); the user that is not overcome by automatisms and who can make use of faults and errors detected on his or her own in the area of interpretation (obtaining senses), interaction (interface) and experience of aesthetic satisfaction. The tension between playing and “being played” should be kept in balance. The player influences the form of the work, which changes the player imperceptibly by teaching him or her the alternative protocols of communication or by referring him or her to meanings that go beyond the register of the obvious, “the intelligible”. It has to be kept in mind, however, that (statistics are straightforward in this case) transgressive players represent only a small proportion of the whole community of players. Most of them prefer following the rules and playing their parts, which evokes a picture of conduct analogous to other social groups such as artistic communities or other groups interested in artistic work. It is comforting to know that inventions made by “the transgressive” often prove to be widely applicable for “the conservative”.

Having made some important digressions, it is time to discuss the phenomenon of simulation, which – according to Aarseth – “is a hermeneutic Other of narrative; the alternative mode of discourse”¹⁴.

“Simulation is a dynamic aspect of games, responsible for the structure of the game world. It is the modeling of one dynamic system through another system (actions and intentions of the player, his or her *agency*)”¹⁵. As for the purely literary kind of cybernetic poetry, one of the objects of simulation is the previously mentioned discontinuity of homeostat (discontinuity that in this case is also “a perceptual requirement of being able to experience such a work of art”¹⁶). However, in the case of our digital works, the situation is more complicated. The nature of their “world” is symbolic, conceptual – limited to simple, controllable geometric figures. The splendor that is characteristic of interactive productions put on the market by software giants is in this case deliberately renounced (“prototyp07”) or ridiculed (“potwierdzam_stel.arf”¹⁷). What phenomenon is the object of simulation here? Can we speak of mimesis in this case at all? It is difficult to answer these questions and not sound contradictory or paradoxical.

The works themselves do not reveal their secrets either. Based on the series of works by Bromboszcz entitled “prototyp”, you can conclude that these works are like “uninhabited structures” that are perhaps built with literature or poetry in mind. For cybernetic poets, a computer game – as an environment favoring the merger of genres and blurring the lines between particular fields of art, and most of all, between creating and recreating – is both an extremely appealing and

14_ **E. Aarseth**, *Genre Trouble: Narrativism and the Art of Simulation*, (in:) **Harrigan, Pat**, *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game*, MIT Press, 2004.

15_ <http://techsty.art.pl/gry/symulacja.html> 16_ *Idem*.

16_ **R. Bromboszcz**, *Cybernetic Poem – Spectra and Alliances*: <http://perfokarta.net/theory/cybernetic.poem.-.spectra.and.alliances.html>

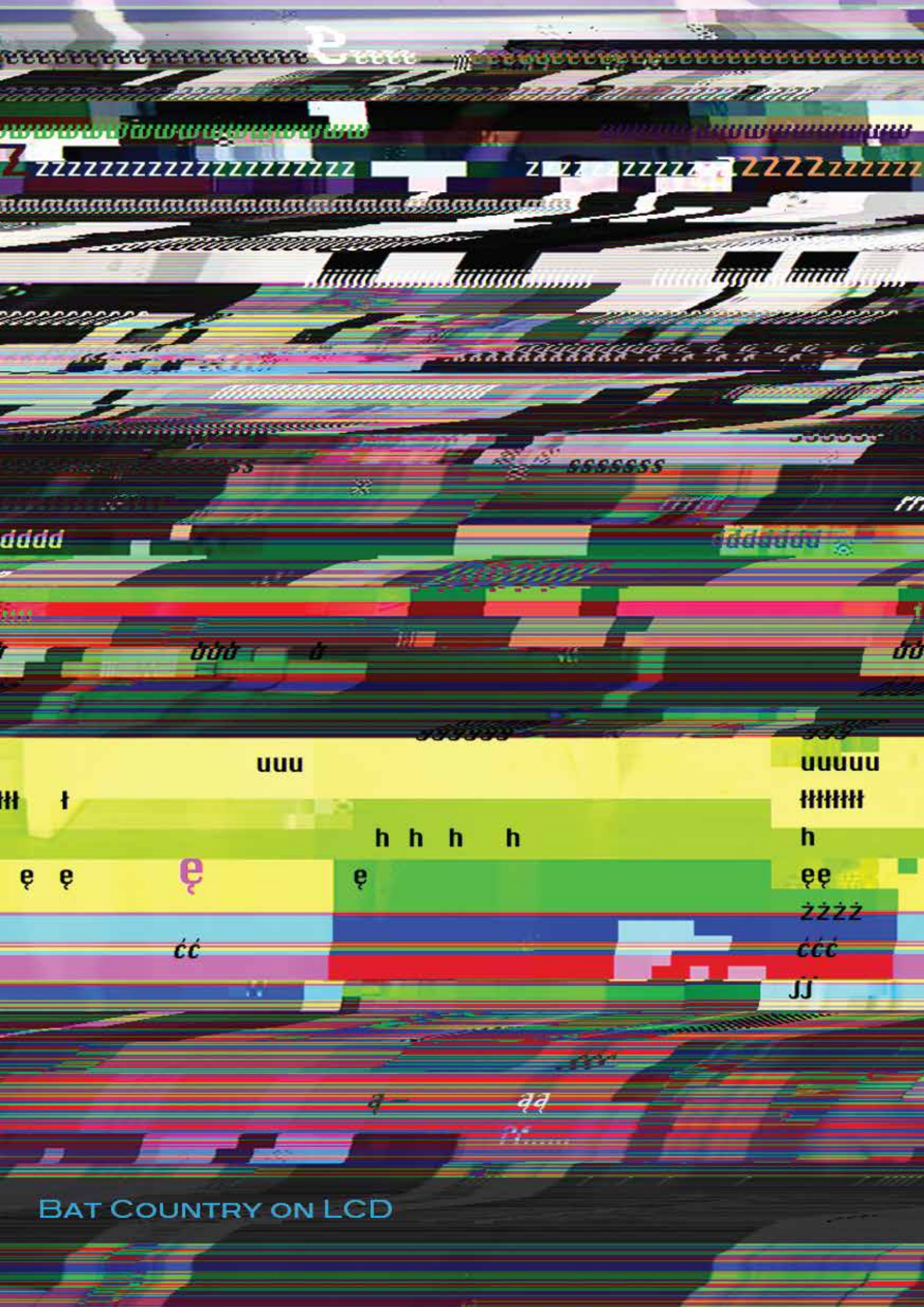
17_ **Ł. Podgórn**i, *potwierdzam_stel.arf*: http://szafranchinche.ovh.org/potwierdzam_stel.html

challenging medium.

The prototypes produced by them are probably just a passing phase.

TRANSLATION: MARCIN PIŃKOWSKI

First published: <http://perfokarta.net/theory/cybernetic.poetry.in.the.context.of.ludology.html>



BAT COUNTRY ON LCD

Leszek Onak Batcountry on LCD | „The object is a remix of „Lament I” by Jan Kochanowski”



URSZULA PAWLICKA

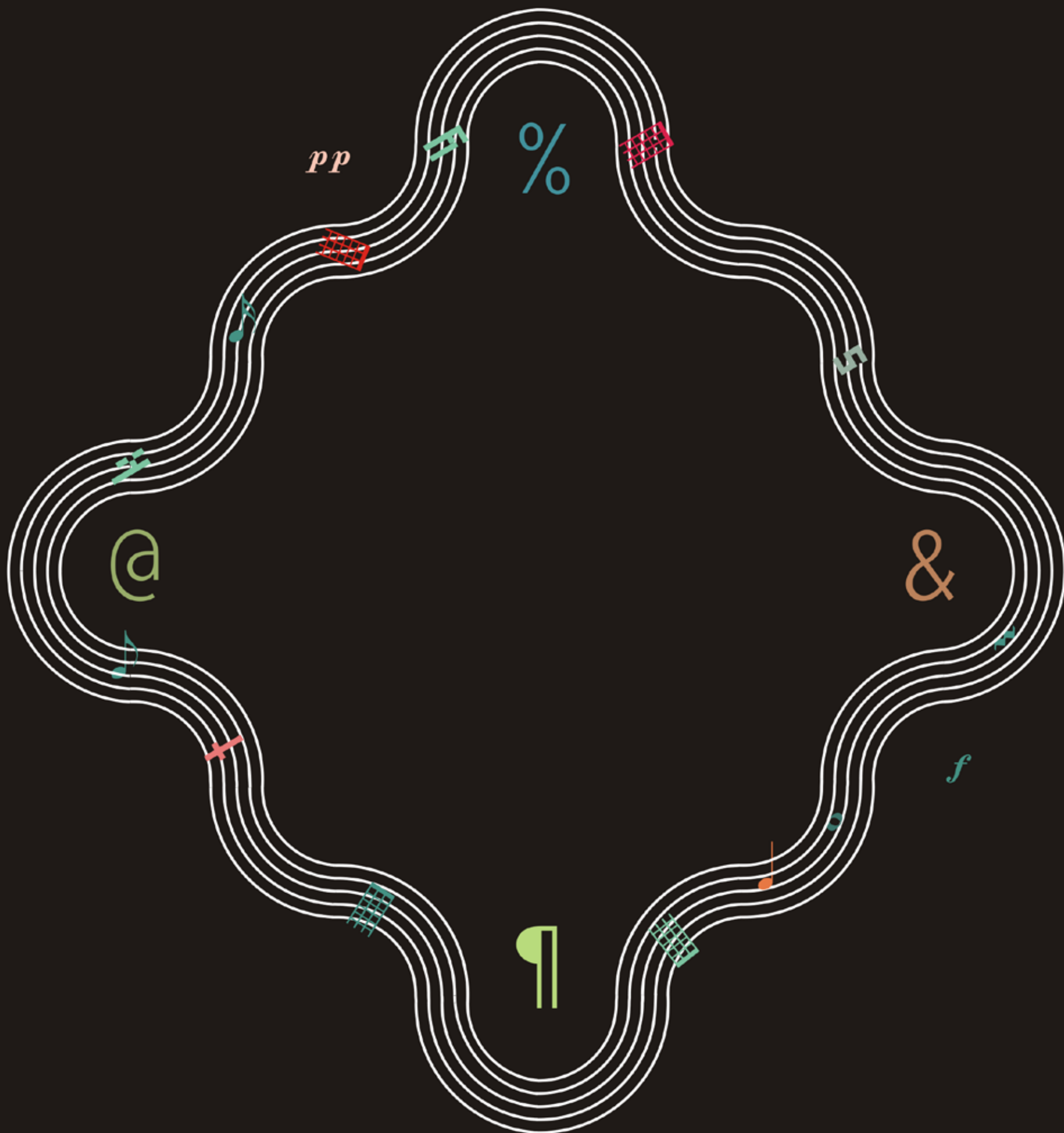
**POLISH
AUTHORS OF
CYBERPOETRY**

Roman Bromboszcz: from conceptual animation to cybernetic prosthesis texts

Roman Bromboszcz is a poet, musician, theoretician and lecturer at the School of Humanities and Journalism in Poznań. He merges visual art and experimental poetry. He is the creator of numerous cybernetic projects and printed volumes: *digital.prayer* (Warszawa, 2008), *U-man i masa* (English: *U-man and Mass*) (Kraków, 2010), *Hz* (Poznań, 2011), *918-578* (Kraków, 2012). He is the author of the theoretical book *Estetyka zakłóceń* (English: *The Aesthetics of Disruption*) (Poznań, 2010).

The word combinations in the artist's projects are linked to their linguistic meaning, which is very important in cyberpoetry. In *Rotator*¹, Bromboszcz presents scattered letters "r", "o", "t", "a", "t", "o", "r", which – as the title implies – rotate at a fixed distance from the middle point, i.e. the letter "a". When the viewer clicks on the center of the work, the letters gain speed and start to make louder sounds, imitating collisions. After some time, the viewer gains the impression

1_ Bromboszcz, *Rotator*: <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/rotator/rotator.html>



Roman Bromboszcz *Spacer po*

that the letters move chaotically, therefore generating new linguistic creations. Rotator is based on distortion and the practices of op-art, which aimed at creating spatial, illusion-like and hypnotic effects. Autonomous signs drift passively to later connect in a textual expression.

In 23:59:59², in turn, he presented the process of combining three types of signs into a more complex structure of an utterance. In the spatial animation, the user observes three circles made of, respectively, letters – alphabet, figures – natural numbers, and punctuation marks. The circles move steadily, at times slightly overlapping, only to drift apart again. The animation underlines how separate the elements of utterances are, and how they need to be combined to create a message. Dynamic objects can also be compared to a planetary system – the circles bring to mind a planet, sun and moon. 23:59:59 suggests a moment before midnight, which can be associated with the culmination of something. The breakthrough would be for the objects to fully overlap and, therefore, merge the signs in the creative process. The user awaits such an event, which will never come, since, first of all, the title indicates a specific time which seems to have stopped, and, secondly, an overlap of the objects would mean a unification, which cyberpoets reject. The aim of the creators is to show the singularity of linguistic signs.

Furthermore, 23:59:59 opens another direction for analysis – the cooperation between linguistics (including literature) and mathematics. The numbers are associated with computational

2_ <<http://techsty.art.pl/gry/symulacja.html>> 16 Idem.

technique, which is used, among others, by cyberpoets. The combination of letter signs with mathematical ones is the subject matter of Bromboszcz's last volume, 918-578.

The independence of letters was also stressed in the animation *Prototyp_1 zażyj klawiatury!*³ (English: *Prototype_1 experience your keyboard!*). It shows three objects placed in space, and each of them represents particular letters of the alphabet, which alternate. As an effect, the screen shows the whole alphabet. The user is expected to click the other end of the animation, so that the objects gain speed, and so stimulated – change their position. At the same time, they need to activate the keyboard. After it is pressed, the image starts to flicker and the letters begin to drift in space. Again, the viewer can witness the freedom and autonomy of the letters, which the creator of a literary work has to stop and merge.

In *bycie i czas*⁴ (English: *being and time*), Bromboszcz stresses, in turn, the fragility of verbal expressions. The animation shows a 6x6 square, made of 12 separate squares. After the cursor is pointed at any of the objects, they not only change their color, but also uncover what is hidden under them. Underneath some of the squares, there are letters which change dynamically. The constant movement of the signs within the space of the object makes them unstoppable – the user does not know where the symbols have moved to and how to immobilize them. The independence and dynamism of the letters is proven once again, as well as the perishability of words, which can quickly fall apart into the elements they are made of.

3_ R. Bromboszcz, *Prototyp_1 zażyj klawiatury!*: <http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/prototyp_01/prototyp_01.html>

4_ R. Bromboszcz, *Bycie i czas*, <<http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/bycie.i.czas/bycie.i.czas.html>>

Then, in *artykulator*⁵ (English: *articulator*), Bromboszcz offers the user a shot at composing music, while at the same time building words through anagrams. The animation shows vertical strings; each has a letter, color and sound ascribed to it. The impression is similar to playing organs and creating words at the same time. So you can hear what melody the word “jelitko” (diminutive form of the word “intestine”) has, and then form the word “kolej” (English: “railway”), which will generate a different sound and set of colors.

The next field of Bromboszcz’s artistic and literary activity is graphic arts. In *Ogród liter*⁶ (English: *The Garden of Letters*), the artist references the category of the labyrinth, which was one of the symbols of visual literature between the 15th and 18th century. He presents a park from a bird’s eye view, in which one sees square patches – the titular letters. The line connecting the signs implies a link to Ariadne’s thread, i.e. a way of getting out of a complicated situation; in this context, it can mean combining letters into larger linguistic expressions. *Ogród liter* is ambiguous in nature; it can be read in a literal manner, but also in the context of visual literature or mythology.

Associativity and ambiguity make themselves known in the image *a-po*⁷, composed of a circle accompanied by scattered letters. In the center of the figure, there is the letter “A” – elongated to imitate its phonic property. The diameter

5_ R. Bromboszcz, *artykulator*, _
<<http://bromboxy.proarte.net.pl/artykulator/artykulator.html>>

6_ R. Bromboszcz, *ogród liter*, _
<<http://br0mb0x.liternet.pl/tekst/ogrod-liter>>

7_ R. Bromboszcz, *a-po*,
<<http://cichynabiau.blogspot.com/?zx=d10a3e75a32e521e>>

consists of "P" and "O", while outside of the circle there are the letters "K", "O" and the phrase "olips". The title implies two ways of reading the scattered letters. The first is based on a linear reconstruction of the title, therefore generating the word "a/po/kalipsa" (English: "apocalypse"). The second method is based on semantic reconstruction of the word; "a" should appear after another letter⁸, resulting in the word "kalipso". The word "kalipso" comes from *kalyptein*, which means "to hide", "to conceal", and this is where the word "apocalypse" stems from. The manifestation of this end of the world in the picture becomes visible due to an interference in the verbal message and the disturbance of the linguistic correctness. From the letters hidden in the circle and outside of it, one should generate coherent images, referencing extra-graphic contexts.

In the works of Bromboszcz an important position is given to man and his place and identity in the technologized reality. This problem is most fully presented in the first two volumes: *digital.prayer* and *U-man i masa*, and it was also thematicized in the exhibition *Połączony/Connected*, which took place in November 2011 at Galeria AT in Poznań. The exhibition was focused around the new variety of man and humanity: "The works presented during the exhibition will, in a metaphorical way, through suggestive images, texts and sounds, explain the aforementioned confrontation between the human being and the mediatized reality of information and energy flow"⁹.

8_ The Polish word "po" means "after" (translator's note)

9_ **R. Bromboszcz**, *Połączony*, _
[http://uap.edu.pl/2011/11/
roman-bromboszcz-%E2%80%93-
polaczony](http://uap.edu.pl/2011/11/roman-bromboszcz-%E2%80%93-polaczony)

The space of human existence is the cybersphere presented as a web – this is the stylistics in which the graphic piece *Connected* (from *U-man i masa*) is kept, showing the image of the human body through the “at” symbol @ and lines which are associated with a global, Internet connection. The representation of an organism as a network can be explained not only in view of constantly being online, but also through the category of the labyrinth, which conveys the meanings of loss and disorientation in cybernetic reality.

Astronauta (English: *The Astronaut*) (*U-man i masa*) presents a virtual, bodiless organism – graphically it is made up exclusively of punctuation marks and mathematical symbols, composed in the shape of the titular character. The helmet head consists of overlapping circles, with the letter “C” in the middle – a reference to cybernetics. The body, in turn, is made up of linked plus signs, which could be a representation of the pushing force, lack of gravitation in virtual reality, and, therefore, “smashing” the body into non-integrated elements. The signs “ {} ”, entwining the figure of the astronaut, could mean a spacesuit or seatbelts, but also, in a broader interpretation – confinement in a room, which brings us again to the metaphor of the web, as well as the system – man as a part of a global computer system. Under the picture, there is the sign “~”, associated with fluidity and the inertia of a body in cyberspace. Severance from the earth’s pull is also suggested by the way the figure is tilted to the right.

Apart from animated, interactive and graphic projects, Bromboszcz is also active in the field of digital art, and publishes printed poetry volumes focused around the subjects of cybernetics, technology, virtuality and corporeality.



it's not a phase
this is who I really am

Łukasz Podgórn *enemy?swag*

Łukasz Podgórní: cybernetic poetry of defect and audiality

Łukasz Podgórní is the author of the poetry volumes *noce i pętle* (English: *nights and loops*) (Kraków, 2010), *Skanowanie balu* (English: *Scanning the Ball*) (Kraków, 2012), a musician, theoretician, and author of experimental projects combining visual poetry with graphics, as well as numerous interactive and audial works. He published, together with Onak, a chapbook titled *wgraa* (Kraków, 2012). His graphic piece *Ra.rar 2 (corrupted)* was included in the international publication *A Global Visuage*¹⁰, dedicated to visual texts.

Unlike Bromboszcz's poetry, Podgórní's projects are most radical in form. This radicalism means an extreme submission to the power of the computer, which takes full control over the shape of the text. Podgórní's works are filled with defects such as blanks, blurred images and duplicates of the same element. Remixing separate fragments through a program or computer system error, as well as distortion, led to disruptions in the message.

Based on rifts, interferences and errors, Podgórní's creation radically redefines the position of the author. While Bromboszcz led a dialogue with the computer, reaching a consensus of sorts, Podgórní rejects dialogue, and instead chooses to fully fuse himself with the device, which quite literally becomes an extension of the human mind. While Bromboszcz, despite everything, is still a creator with the computer as his

10_ *A Global Visuage*, ed. J. Piringer, G. Vallaster, Vienna 2012, p. 61.

tool, in Podgórní's works, this relation is turned upside-down: it is Podgórní who functions as a tool in the hands of the computer – the creator. The author only provides the machine with a set of words, which the latter combines, modifies and deforms.

The main element of Podgórní's digital works is computer-generated sound – this is what gives them the eventual cybernetic feel. "The voice heard from the inside of the system" is irrefutable proof of the fact that the computer is a rightful participant in the communication process. The sounds in Podgórní's output mirror the technologized reality; the machine sounds are a part of the everyday landscape. To quote *Schemat* (English: *Scheme*): "The electricity in our homes wants to sing"¹¹.

This admiration of the tones is the reason why Podgórní mostly works with audial projects; even if there is some text, it is subordinate to sounds. The artist often uses the rule of the musical loop, allowing the viewer to fully experience the part of reality that is assaulting our sense of hearing, as is the case with *potwierdzam_stel.arf*¹². Composed text is really just an addition to the generated sounds, which offer a wide range of electronic tones – this is exemplified by *krytyka chleba, gwiazd, kamienia*¹³ (English: *the criticism of bread, stars, stone*). Although it contains words, they are dominated by the audial element, continuously activated by the user.

11_ **Ł. Podgórní**, *Schemat*:
<<http://szafranchinche.ovh.org/schemat.html>>

12_ **Ł. Podgórní**, *potwierdzam_stel.arf*: <http://szafranchinche.ovh.org/potwierdzam_stel.html>

13_ **Ł. Podgórní**, *krytyka chleba, gwiazd, kamienia*: <<http://techsty.art.pl/magazyn/magazyn5/kcgk/kcgk.html>>

Sounds are also present in the conceptual works, focused around linguistic problems. In *w sprawie rimbaudowych samogłosek*¹⁴ (English: *about Rimbaud's vowels*), the author presents the phonics of chosen vowels in a synesthetic manner, and points out the connection between graphic visualization and the process of the production of words, and their sound. Podgórní also produces interactive works, demanding either constant involvement, as is the case with *whirlpool from Liverpool*¹⁵, or just activation – like *matko zawrotna* (English: *mother vertiginous*)¹⁶.

The former piece is visually a keyboard of sorts, under the keys of which there are hidden words. The user “types on the keyboard,” at the same time creating text. The generation of the message through the movement of the computer mouse is accompanied by the sound of particular expressions being pronounced aloud. When we move our cursor to the keys, the sounds overlap, mutate into other sounds, creating a mix of verbal noise. A fragment of poetry, lost in the process, morphs into another one, which is again deformed by the racket of following signals. Through consolidation, we achieve an effect of both structural and semantic distortion of the text.

Next, *matko zawrotna* presents a text written in a circle. The mechanism activating the center of the objects

14_ **Ł. Podgórní**, *w sprawie rimbaudowych samogłosek*: http://labela.perfokarta.net/podgorn/w_sprawie.html ; more about the composition: Więcej o utworze: http://labela.perfokarta.net/podgorn/w_sprawie_rimbaudowych_samoglosek_i_innych.html

15_ **Ł. Podgórní, T. Pułka**, *whirlpool from Liverpool*: <http://techsty.art.pl/magazyn/magazyn5/wfl/wfl.html>

16_ **Ł. Podgórní**, *matko zawrotna*, 2007: <http://szafranchinche.blogspot.com/2007/08/matko-zawrotna-knc.html>

causes the circle to turn, so that the verbal expressions become blurred, and in return the user hears distorted sounds of speech, resembling the reading of the text. The kinetic and visual experience of a rolling, vertiginous image is supposed to mirror the sense of the linguistic aspect: “the silence is the sound of world’s speed/light is the god of sound’s speed/god is the high speed of light/god is the light’s high speed”. The repeated words *speed*, *light* and *sound* are mirrored by the dynamics of the animation. Through interaction, the form of the object is changed; it enhances and interprets the meaning of the text.

*Rozstrzelam krew*¹⁷ (English: *I’ll execute blood*), in turn, is an interactive, multi-layer work, to be discovered by the user more by accident than through conscious choices. Podgórní describes the project in the following words: “It discusses the oppression of the public fractal. The probability of the user discovering some of the levels is extremely low; to access them, the user needs to undertake a series of actions precisely designed by the author”¹⁸. There is no manual for the composition; this does not mean that the user gets lost easily, but it makes finding the connections rather difficult. The only hint for the reception is the sentence “Revolutionary/contemplative operating is advisable”. This is a valuable piece of advice in the face of strings with cacophonous sounds and deconstructed text, which can be destroyed and then built anew.

Another field of Podgórní’s activity are graphic works based on the remix

17_ Ł. Podgórní, *rozstrzelam krew*:
<http://szafranchinche.ovh.org/rozstrzelam_krew/rozstrzelam_krew.html>

18_ Ibid.

of content and game aesthetics – such as *space#invaders*¹⁹. *Schowani*²⁰ (English: *the hidden ones*) is an interesting example, an image composed of a number of circles imitating the labyrinth of the internet network, overpowering the user. A spider web entwines a unit which is visually represented by letters, pointing at two ways of reading them: from the top and from the bottom. The result of a top to bottom reconstruction is the word “WHO” – a question about a person, an everyman in the culture of virtual reality. Reading the letters the other way, we end up with the word “HOW”, provoking us to reflect on the manner of “imprisonment”. The title implies conscious isolation. The graphic image, on the other hand, presents a state of confinement, leading to a different connotation, one linked to incapacitation, addiction and inability to leave. Alienation is replaced with exclusion, which is barring from the outside. Another interesting element is the reversed letter “A”, which can be associated not only with the sense of sight, but also the inversion of values or the state of being lost and helpless.

On the right side of the graphic image, there appears, and then disappears at a certain moment, a rainbow consisting of dollar signs – the image can be interpreted as dependence on finances, blindness brought about by money, which constitutes the “halo” of the present day. Underneath, the creator placed the word “NIE!”

(English: “NO!”), in reference to the poetics of a propaganda poster or public service announcement. The word serves as a negation of the

19_ **Ł. Podgórn**i, *space#invaders*:
<http://szafranchinche.ovh.org/space_invaders.html>

20_ **Ł. Podgórn**i, *schowani*:
<<http://szafranchinche.ovh.org/schowani.html>>

pictured situation, i.e. an expression of protest against the growing state of alienation or exclusion.

In his works, Podgórní depicts himself as a “DJ of literary beats”: he collects stray letters and sounds, so that he can mix and merge them and, as a result, create a multitask composition. “With a shaking hand, you regulate the set” – crackling elements, text distortions and blurred image are also present in the volume *noce i pętle*, which can be described as “cyberpoetry unplugged”²¹. Podgórní proves that cybernetic works can also exist in analogue form. We might get phonetic poetry instead of poetry based on sound, a visual work in place of a moving one, but the analogue version is still worth attention because of how it is resaturated with defects and errors.

In 2011, Podgórní and Onak established a publishing company and web-zine called “Rozdzielczość Chleba” (English: “The Resolution of Bread”). Another joint endeavor was the publication of a chapbook of poetry, *wgraa*²² (2012), focused around the enigmatically sounding issue of jargon.

The Internet, “populated” by avatars and nicknames, uses many jargons: the language of comments, programming languages (e.g. RSS, html, php), the language of YouTube, Facebook, the language of remix, repost, memes, acronyms, emoticons etc. The Internet is a linguistic fair. This is why Podgórní and Onak reformulate

21_ **U. Pawlicka**, *O „nocach i pętlach” Łukasza Podgórníego*, 2010: <http://niedoczytania.pl/o-nocach-i-petlach-lukasza-podgorniego/>

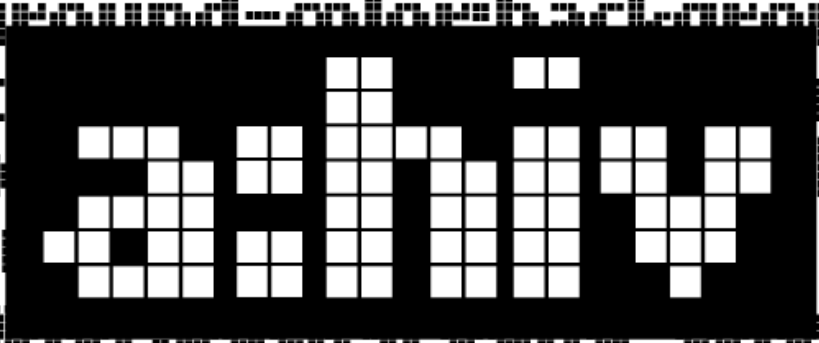
22_ **L. Onak, Ł. Podgórní**, *wgraa*, Kraków 2012.

the word “gwara” (the Polish word for “jargon”) into an anagram, “wgraa”, introducing a context of playfulness into the digital compositions²³. Ludicity, a lasting element of folk culture, is a constant quality of the Internet. The Internet has changed the nature of entertainment. “Kaszubskie nuty” (English: Kashubian Notes²⁴) are not only played on violins, but also listened to on computers. Instead of bonfires, we now have house parties with YouTube in the background. Instead of going outside, we play Farmville.

Wgraa is an amusing presentation of Internet ludicity, which was more fully expressed during live performances: at the Downtown Culture Centre in Kraków (on September 7th, 2012) and during the 8th Poetic Manifestations Festival in Warsaw (on September 8th, 2012). The authors mixed together texts and videos downloaded from the web with sounds mimicking folk songs. A colorful element of the 21st century are the glitches generated by a computer. Loss of data, system freeze or a bugged program are the tragedies of 21st-century man, whose state of impotence and frustration can only be expressed through digital art and literature.

23_ The Polish word “gra” means “game” (translator’s note)

24_ A popular Kashubian folk song, an important element of Kashubian folklore (translator’s note)



Leszek Onak: poetry of algorithm and remix

Leszek Onak is the founder of the literary portal niedoczytania.pl (together with Łukasz Libiszewski), the Liternet foundation and the aforementioned Hub Wydawniczy Rozdzielczość Chleba. He is an author of algorithmic, kinetic, graphic and visual projects incorporating a variety of methods and stylistics in his works. His composition *Faith. Hope. Love* was published in the international anthology *A Global Visuage*²⁵.

Although most of his works are static, they still require a specific kind of interaction from the user. His projects are, in a way, a game with the reader – with his perceptive habits, preferences and rituals. They have to decipher the meaning, existing at an intersection of multiple texts of culture – the author draws from classic and avant-garde literature, music, computer games, and Internet news, only to decontextualize them. Patching together fragments and giving them a new context points to the postmodernist idea of Barth that everything has been done before, and thus all we have left is to use the resources of the past and repeat them.

Onak shows us a world which, instead of a linear arrangement (ordered from past to future), has the structure of a network – there is no distinction of tenses, no boundaries between various streams, trends and genres.

All divisions have been abolished by virtual Internet life, which also influences real life. This is depicted in the project *kręgosłup czasu*²⁶ (English: *backbone of time*) consisting of fixed text written into a moving wheel. The movement causes the words on different parts of the figure to change their positions, and so the reading depends on the user's activity – they choose for themselves the linear structure to follow from the outer part towards the center. It can be read in many ways; for example, starting with the word "nigdy" (English: "never"), one can create expressions such as "never is presence", "never was past", "never will be nothingness". *Kręgosłup czasu* is a protean composition – constant movement is responsible for its polyphonic reading. The movement visualizes the meaning of the linguistic code, namely the impossibility of delimiting the border between tenses. There is no difference between "yesterday", "today", "tomorrow", and "never", nor between "past", "present" and "future". The versatile and fluid composition of the work mirrors and enhances the sense of fluctuating reality.

The world filtered through a web of texts appears in Onak's works as a database, from which we can pick elements to deform and mix. The Internet is the natural habitat for an artist; first and foremost, a source of content – the creator relies on web absurdities, news, system errors, commands and "no access" messages. An example of a project conditioned by the Internet is *sonet niezachodzący*²⁷ (English: *a non-occurring sonnet*), consisting in remixing articles from leading

26_ L. Onak, *kręgosłup czasu*, 2012: <http://http404.org/osc/kręgosłup.swf>

27_ L. Onak, *sonet niezachodzący*: <http://http404.org/sonetniezachodzacy/credits.php>

Polish Internet media. Randomly chosen titles of current texts are combined into one piece that is “non-occurring”, i.e. constantly renewable – despite a closed database (particular websites), it is elastic and changes depending on the articles published. In the editor’s note, Onak brings up the question: “Don’t those titles from the complementarily constructed world of information taken out of context and put together cause anxiety? ” A “non-occurring” piece is the quintessence of a society always wanting new, sensational information. It is worth noticing how the link to a particular generated sonnet is constantly obsolete – every time it will send us to a new creation, based on the most recent news.

For Onak, the computer is a tool not only for creating a particular project in a program, but especially an appliance automatically generating an object by translating verbal input into programming language or by using program defects.

Onak is interested in the life of man in the real world, shaped by the virtual world, and this is why everyday life is presented with the use of computer language. In two of his visual works: *pętla metafizyczna/firewall*²⁸ (English: *metaphysical loop/firewall*) and *pętla metafizyczna/bez zapory*²⁹ (English: *metaphysical loop/no barrier*) he presents the process of finding a file on the computer, which is, at the same time, a metaphor for the social system. The first depiction, firewall, i.e. with a barrier, shows a black circle in the center, around which there are some inscriptions

28_ **L.Onak**, *pętla metafizyczna/firewall*, 2012: <http://leszek-onak.liternet.pl/tekst/petla-metafizyczna-dyptyk>

29_ **Onak**, *pętla metafizyczna/bez zapory*, 2012: <http://leszek-onak.liternet.pl/tekst/petla-metafizyczna-dyptyk>

on a white background which read from the outside towards the inside, generating the following sentences: "ALGORITHM CHECKING IF FILE EXISTS", "If it exists, it shows its content", "If not, it checks if catalogue exists", "If yes, it performs the script and shows results", "If not, it checks if system exists", "If yes, it activates its core", "If not, it repeats the loop". The option with the "barrier" pictures a world whose cognition was delimited to the Google search engine – if it doesn't find the right search term, it means the phenomenon does not exist. What appears then is a "blockade" in discovering reality, since our knowledge is determined by the Internet database. The media/the Internet at the center of reality (symbolized by the black circle) manipulate it. They also manipulate society by creating new entities – "files" – and by destroying them (removing them or blocking access). *Metaphysical loop/firewall* shows a world ruled by software, based on an algorithm – certain rules and regulations – and this is why the image is composed in an organized and centralized manner.

In *pętla metafizyczna/bez zapory*, we can observe the center moved to the margin – the background of the image becomes black, and the center white. With the change of color comes an anarchistic demolition of the text, where in place of vowels, only blanks are left. The image presents movement from the outside, resisting invigilation and control – a hacker intervention in the software led to the abolition of the system. Interestingly, the software wins again, since the hackers, in their attack on the "software", themselves use an algorithm. The attacker becomes the attacked – the noose tightens.

The depiction with “no barrier” shows also the process of growing up and gaining independence: the time of leaving a controlled environment (family) and the moment of confrontation between our own ideas and the attitudes of other people. The clash of different kinds of awareness and experiencing new “algorithms” proves, at the same time, that the return to the world with a “barrier” is not possible, and, furthermore – that it was only ever an illusion.

Onak’s algorithmic projects additionally present the problem of experiencing noise and confronting the ideals of youth with reality, as is the case with, for example, *dopasowanie wzorca*³⁰ (English: *adjusting the pattern*), based on the text of *First Epistle to the Corinthians* by St. Paul. Each word in the text undergoes permutation – the letters change places alternately, which keeps the composition in a permanent state of malfunction and unavailability. The moving text poses a question about the shape of love in the digital era, about whether the biblical text is still meaningful today, and about the possibility of translating, or adjusting, it to the current times.

A special artistic technique typical for Onak is remix – the transformation of an existing text, or merely leaving traces of it through the use of excerpts. The author mostly cuts out, or rather erases, the parts he doesn’t need. The elements that are left become one image, additionally incorporated into a contemporary context. An example of this is *Irakijki*³¹ (English: *The Iraqi Women*), in which he

30_ **L.Onak**, *dopasowanie wzorca*: http://http404.org/d_w/

31_ **L.Onak**, *Irakijki*, 2011: <http://neurokultura.pl/drama/1086-onak-leszek-irakijki.html>



remixed the stage directions from Jean Paul Sartre's drama *The Trojan Women by Euripides*. The French dramatist used the last part of Euripides's trilogy about the Trojan war to present the humanist view that war has no winners – only victims. The topic is still important in the 21st century, and the remix by Onak proves this, with its title referencing the war in Iraq. The author worked only with the stage directions, which turned out so emotionally charged that they suffice to express the tragedy. The cut dialogues and repeated phrase "moment of silence" direct our attention to the issue of inexpressible human tragedy and to the aspect of meaningful silence, more powerful than words can be.

planowanie
kontrola przejazdów
nad wykonaniem
funkcja władzy
tycypacja
kiwanie

Planning, control over crossings
over execution
<unreadable> of power
<unreadable> ticipation
<unreadable> tation

Piotr Puldzian Płucienniczak: poetry of glitch

Piotr Puldzian Płucienniczak is the author of *marsz na ROM*³² (English: *march on ROM*), a collection of glitch texts which raise the problem of the relationship between society and authority and, at the same time, serve as an expression of protest against the current socio-political system.

The title references a type of electric device memory which is read-only – it cannot be edited. And so, “ROM” is, first of all, a symbol of authority, hierarchy and manipulation. Moreover, it is a manifestation of suppressing rebellion and almost complete stifling of the voice of citizens. Thirdly, it is a sign of how users are subordinated to the system, programmed by controlling units. Therefore, the “march on ROM” means a revolutionary outburst

32_ P. Puldzian Płucienniczak,
marsz na ROM (e-book) 2012:
http://www.śc-ch.pl/marsz_na_rom.html

and fight for a change of the political system. RO – read-only – culture should transform into RW culture – the culture of reading and rewriting. RW underlines the fundamental role of the user, who is able to make his own decisions and who, most of all, can take active part in creating contemporary culture. “March on ROM” is an expression of the objection to legalizing copyright, invigilation and selection of content. The protest is directed also against the centralization of the information system, Internet policy and hierarchical authority, which does not take society into account. Finally, “march on ROM” means formatting in the name of participation. Formatting references clearing the hard drive, giving a new shape to something or adjusting a drive to new parameters. Therefore, in Puldzian’s works formatting means rebuilding the socio-political system, destroying the current one to create a new one that is based on society’s active participation in the functioning of the country and a collective decision-making process in matters concerning common life.

Płucienniczak’s glitches prove his thesis of turning the Author into a Generator, a Noise-Making-Machine: “If we are looking for a new metaphor for the author, let this role, at least for now, be fulfilled by a hacked proxy server”³³. “The hacking of the server” is illustrated by shattered poemographics, the effect of constantly modifying the same image, or maybe of concatenation – mixing various texts into one. A glitch is an expression of “sabotaging” objection to current politics; it uncovers the truth about the system of the country, which is not pure and orderly; it also

33_ P. Puldzian Płucienniczak, *CONTROL CANNOT HOLD: Polityka hałasu, ekonomia usterek*, “Ha!art” 2012, Issue 37, p. 69.

points out the areas that society rejects, stifles, and which thus fight to be heard through “hacking”. Glitch is proof that control over technology and media is an illusion. Finally – it is an image of a new, participation-based, system.

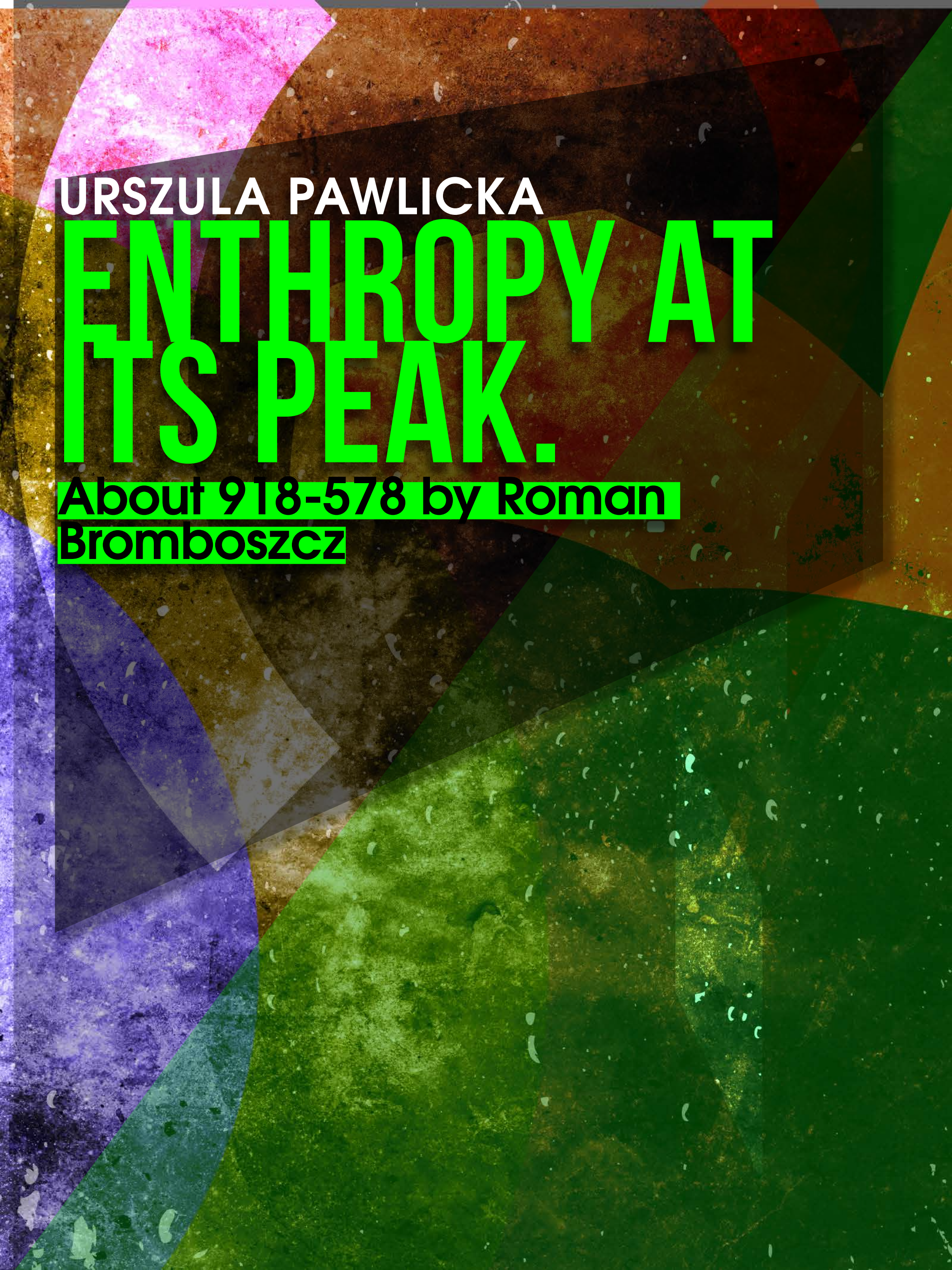
Also present in *marsz na ROM* is concrete and visual poetry. However, no creation is free of a critical attitude towards the country and authority. *t-polityka* (English: *t-politics*) shows letters which both create the word “smycz” (English: “leash”) and are graphically composed into the shape of the object. The title, together with the meaning of the function of a “leash”, points to the nature of a country’s politics, based on control, manipulation and repression. *ouin?* and *przekaz pedagogiczny* (English: *pedagogical message*), in turn, reference demolished, distorted texts, similar to works by concrete poetry authors. The annihilated text becomes a misinformative antipicture. *Przekaz pedagogiczny* is composed of verbal expressions which overlap, giving the impression of noise. The work, purely graphic in nature, pictures the phenomenon of cumulating transmissions, ironically showing actions that counter those that are supposedly pedagogical – instead of making the picture clearer, the text makes it even more illegible.

Works by Puldzian directly address the software malfunctions and communication interferences that we experience every day. Glitch pictures, however, have a deeper meaning – they mirror his way of thinking about the world. Glitch becomes, on the one hand, a criticism of the current socio-political system, and, on the other hand – a proposed form of

resistance in the name of building a new order. As the artist himself says: “Glitch is the God particle”³⁴.

TRANSLATION: EWA BOMBA

Fragments of the text come from the book: U. Pawlicka, *(Polska) poezja cybernetyczna. Konteksty i charakterystyka*, Kraków 2012.



URSZULA PAWLICKA

ENTROPY AT ITS PEAK.

About 918-578 by Roman
Bromboszcz

With *U-man i masa* (English: *U-man and mass*) and *H_z*, Bromboszcz had accustomed his readers to forms that lack cohesion, are “diffused” and multicomponent, and, above all, require contextualization. *U-man i masa* was dominated by the question of the cybersphere linked with cybernetic sciences, which work to steer the machines, but also living creatures and society in general. The image of *homo cyber*, a human in the cybernetic reality, was accompanied by issues of his identity and carnality. Cybernetics was also present in the way the pieces were composed, through a stochastic process. In *H_z*, Bromboszcz presented the development and evolution of culture as a background for the process of the mechanization of man in the technologized world. He described the passage from the image of Arcadia to an arrow icon on the screen, and from the labyrinth of a garden to the labyrinth of the web. At the high point, cybernetics invades natural areas. This is what poses the question about the possibility (or meaning) of returning to “primary languages” and the further progress of “machine languages”. The titular unit of frequency was meant to provoke readers to further consider the next cultural breakthrough.

If we consider the works by Bromboszcz in a wider context, the newest volume, *918-5785*¹, should not be a source of doubt or disappointment. It is a natural consequence of the search for forms through dialogue with technologies. Pieces “infected” with numeric signs can baffle and provoke questions about the message, which will not be uncovered through traditionally understood poem interpretation. As it is, the reception of the texts which radically combine literature and mathematics is not achieved through classic verse-after-verse reading, but by treating them as a certain whole, which is a response to the question about the shape of a poem in contact with technological appliances. *918-578* is firmly embedded in the context of information theory, cybernetics and posthumanism. While in the past volumes one can notice the motif of the connection between man and the machine, word and image and sound, in *918-578* one element becomes synthetically dissolved in the other.

The first issue brought up by the author is the way texts are generated in accordance with the algorithmic rule. Bromboszcz drew words from three books: *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes, *Philosophy in the Bedroom* by Marquiz de Sade and *Paradise Lost* by John Milton. The words were put in a different order, following the idea of anagrams, and no pair of words was repeated.

Not for the first time in his literary and artistic career, Bromboszcz strives to present the process of automatized writing. *918-578* is, therefore, a collection of cybernetic pieces, created through interaction between the author and the

computer. 918-578 is practically an image of a poet-computer interface, pointing out the moment of generating mechanical texts. Literature is a database, and assembled creations are saved as mathematical functions in HTML or PHP. One of the currents of posthumanism assumes transgressing the confines of humanity, which would be achieved through uniting man and machine. The representative figure here is the cyborg – a person created through a merge with technology. Without doubt, in his dialogue with the computer, the author generates texts marked with a touch of “otherness” – traces of the object with which he establishes contact. Therefore, the literary work is transfigured: literary signs are equaled with numerical ones, they are decentralized and, above all, naturalized. Writing computer code or generating objects in programs forces us to question what should be considered as “natural” and what as “artificial”.

Bromboszcz presents a sort of prosthesis text, in which, beside “natural” elements, namely words, there appear some “unnatural” ones, i.e. numbers. Mathematical parts seem to fill “blanks” in the text. Poetry that is “artificial”, cybernetic, composed from extralinguistic elements, emphasizes the relation between letters and numerals. In Bromboszcz’s works, each number has a letter ascribed to it; the signs are thus both mechanically exchanged, by the author, and automatically decoded, by the reader. In effect, the line between “natural” and “artificial” elements becomes blurred, since we do not know what came first – the letter or the number.

Generating digital text is a process of converting or translating

linguistic material, and this is why the mechanism of activating the pieces is important. Prosthesis texts uncover the inner layer of the programmable object, and show the system of its construction, which assumes the creation of an algorithm or the use of computer language. Bromboszcz unveils before the reader cybernetic poetry in its raw state – a piece during the programming process. A digital object is not only what the user sees on their screen, but also the entire course of its composition, which consists in welding together a variety of ingredients.

A cybernetic author takes into account the enormous number of errors and defects that can appear during production as a result of working with a computer. Therefore, in the context of information theory, 918-578 is presented as Peirce's symbols, signals and noises – during the reception, the input information was destroyed, becoming a sort of interference. This is why Lev Manovich demonstratively underlines the importance of *software*, which influences the shape of the conveyed message. He proposes a model of communication for "post-digital" culture that is as follows: sender – *software* – information – *software* – recipient.

Numerals here are, on the one hand, a sign of the artist's integration with the computer and the text's integration with the computer environment; on the other hand, they are a defect originating in the reading process or incorrect programming.

The fascination with mathematization was already visible in

Marsz na ROM (English: *March on ROM*), a poetry volume by Piotr Puldzian Płucienniczak, is a collection of short, ciphered poetic and visual forms. Samples of text, just like music sampling, create an unequivocal multi-narrative. We can find here both cleverly weaved criticism of the present (politics, literature, Internet society) and an account of the living conditions in the digitalized reality. The reader is hit with illustrated texts describing deviations and social pathologies, balanced with formally minimalistic erotic pieces placed next to them.

The author of the *Marsz na ROM* experiment created an original poetic language, founded on programming languages and digital text processing. The pieces, composed in the spirit of neoconcretism, are full of intentional errors (of file saving, print or style), interference (glitch), digital and graphic treatment, sign prostheses, replacement characters normally considered typographically incorrect, blurry texts bordering on incomprehensibility of meanings and visuals, and finally – complete “annihilation of the system”. Apart from the purely cyberpoetic model, there are also some pictograms in traditional form, diacritics, diphthongs and ligatures (the latter often in a version redesigned by the author), as well as simple, yet ambiguous, wordplays, syntactic and logical errors (achieved, e.g., by using a letter error carrying many meanings, like in the poem opening the first part of the volume, *formatowanie* (English: *formatting*), or in the way the words “kontestacja” (English: “contestant”) and “koncentracja” (English: “concentration”) fluidly permeate each other in the second to last part of the volume).

Płucienniczak's volume, however, is more than just a collection of defects. Screechy abnormalities in the recording, created by interfering the zero-one stimulus or by program bugs, do not stem from accidentally created source code. Jagged texts are the author's chosen method of work, allowing him to convey the nature of the unstable and heterogeneous language of the Internet and virtual reality (VR). Płucienniczak paints the world communicatively split apart, full of ambiguity and insinuations – unclear, unchecked and contradictory pieces of information. He strives to situate himself against a landscape that is virtually impossible to comprehend or recognize, and searches for extra-literary forms to describe it. *Marsz na ROM* presents the difficulty of finding methods to understand this world. Rhythmical combinations of short, glimmering visual and poetic models, compilations of random data, artificial fillings or deficiencies in the body of the language are the ways in which the author tests the capacity of both the computer and linguistic system. Płucienniczak records images of contemporary, jagged reality, difficult to translate into a known language. He designs his own, original vision of this post-Lem landscape. A vision in which Lem's grave remains prophetically empty.

TRANSLATION: EWA BOMBA

First published: artPapier, 2013, No. 1:

<http://www.artpapier.com/index.php?page=artykul&wydanie=168&artykul=3579>

MAŁGORZATA DAWIDEK
GRYGlicka

ABOUT MARSZ
NA ROM
BY PIOTR
PULDZIAN
PŁUCIENNICZAK

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TRANSLATION: EWA BOMBA

First published: <http://xn---ch-ppa33b.pl/marsz-na-rom/>

in previous eras;

leads

process; and then process leaves

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WORK CAN ### enlig?

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Piotr Puldzian Płucienniczak, Performance based on his poetry volume
"Marsz na ROM" – Literki, Kraków 2012 (fot. Krzysztof Hawrot)

MARIUSZ PISARSKI

SKANOWANIE BALU-ŁUKASZ PODGÓRNI'S SWIMMING SCHOOL

Bill Viola, a legend of video-art, supposedly once said that he didn't think of himself as a video-artist, but felt he was simply an artist. The medium he chose for his form of expression, television footage and professional (as well as amateur) videos, so popular two decades ago, seemed like the most adequate field for his activity.

Łukasz Podgórni seems to be saying a similar thing with his *Skanowanie balu*¹ (English: *Scanning the Ball*): I am not a cybernetic poet, I am a poet. Although in the case of the "cybernetic" poets this is nothing

1_ Ł. Podgórni, *Skanowanie balu*, 2012. Korporacja Ha!art: <http://www.ha.art.pl/wydawnictwo/katalog-ksiazek/2681-lukasz-podgorni-skanowanie-balu.html>. Hub Wydawniczy Rozdzielczość Chleba: http://issuu.com/rozdzielczosc-chleba/docs/lukasz_podgorni_-_skanowanie_bal

new – Podgórní, Bromboszcz, Onak, Misiak and Puldzian quite regularly make use of print – it is still worthwhile to see how the Cracovian poet deals with paper today, as it has been three years since his last solo volume, *noce i pętle* (English: *nights and loops*).

In the meantime, Podgórní was present both online and offline, on websites, in files, in collections written together with other authors, in galleries and bookshops, at international festivals and conferences, during cyberpoetic veejaying and scandalous performances (*vide Spacer po sprzęgle*² (English: *A Walk on a Clutch*) by Pułka, Bromboszcz and Podgórní on YouTube).

All of this activity proves that print is no second lung for Podgórní, and definitely not a “mother country” to which he returns. Let us leave this cliché print-pixel opposition, then, let us move aside this too easily adopted dialectic of printed>cybernetic>post-cybernetic, and let us summon a modicum of attention and see what is actually going on here...

According to Marjorie Perloff, the most influential critic of contemporary American poetry, the ability to cross from one medium to another allows the poet to move within various space-time continuums of the language, convention and genre. While Podgórní’s digital works combining text with processed speech and sound, image, and animation automatically make him one of

2_ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SAWe042YMs>

the authors connected to cyberpoetry and music, and to the chaosmos typical to them (and familiar to us), his independent appearance in print, restrained in measure and lacking extratextual references to the digital world, is evidently directed at a space-time continuum curved in a different direction. This is indicated by evoking the name of Tytus Czyżewski at the very beginning of the book – he is Podgórní's patron saint in the world of ink and paper, a white window of word processor and cursor, and the avant-garde, surreal pre-war poetry sets the tone for the whole. From the very beginning, Podgórní kept close to its spirit with surprising, far-reaching metaphors and absurdist, collage-like imagery (*Skanowanie balu* starts with the couplet *Why are canes lying in the streets,/And cars are pelted with flesh*). Here the poet goes further, though, to reach for linguistic, stylistic and visual props from the aforementioned era, for example in the poems *onSelfevent* (*enter frame, including first frame*) and *Kursor znajduje się wewnątrz ramki* (English: *The cursor is located within the frame*). Subtly incorporating these props into contemporary situations, into a space-time continuum more familiar to us, Podgórní suggests that he is no worse than Czyżewski. Because he is not. Such strong, militaristic phrases as the ones from *OnSelfEvent* would have been praised by Mayakovsky himself:

I wake the sursicks in poor telescope:

I stretch my eye and affairs. I stretch my eye

and affairs. You have your spray phone, maybe pick up?

I stretch the eye, affairs, carver... carver at once.

I stretch the timber

in a gown, you were at a ball, after all. Approach to me,

*kettles and stones, I need to get two tenners from
somewhere.*

}

Hypnotic rhythm, surreal imagery and a patchwork of polyphony when various languages interrupt each other – all that we are familiar with from the author's digital works here floats in an attractive retro vibe. But nothing attractive lasts forever. Today's poetry cannot only be like this, it needs to be given contemporary challenges and listen to language with a brand-new stethoscope... this is why further parts of *Skanowanie balu* will not be so painless to read. They will not, because they cannot. The world goes on, routers work faster and faster, *Noce i pętle* was three years ago and it cannot be argued: technology is infecting the environment. Moreover, Roman Bromboszcz publishes huge, noisy paper poetries, which even further challenge the idea of a poetic tome. And so, Podgórní cannot content himself with a magnificent surrealistic phrase of digital existentialism, referring to the grandfather moloch of the 20th-century avant-garde; he has to poison this newly discovered language the moment he finds it; he needs to scan this ball.

Surprisingly, even then, *Skanowanie balu* reads well, and the balance between the struggle and satisfaction from overcoming it sways in the way of reading pleasure, and not eternal torments. Waldemar Jocher is right when he writes that these poems have a "main window". Most of them, on the local unit level, introduce their own language of

overdetermination, which the reader, guided by words, signs, javascript commands, with which the piece is incrustated, reads. Of course, this is decryption – in a Jakobsonian sense – taken to a whole new level, since the game is expanded by the code, not necessarily a computer one, and, second of all, a cipher, according to which it was put in the text. Hermeneutists must be so excited! For example? For example:

I.ve a..tail | _____ | a.nna.s.ee

tha.t | d | -coat you sco.und.rel yo.u w | it they paint sitt.

i.n.g.. | o?... irrate when | of projections..

____.. | ... with a ground-level

5. for | kids | hooked, cut madonna, do whtvr you wnna

*but troub | trouts to be | itching for your ratters some
tatters*

– it's jus | le me there st | trindberg

____ | t like the dream play by s |

The user learns to read this poem in the first two lines. In the third one, he starts to put together the cut-up parts, and by the end – almost to anticipate the coming collisions of words and images, straight from Gysin or Burroughs. This acidification of paper with a solution of javascript, beer and LSD (or fantasies about it) is carried out with a particular intention in mind, and we learn it during reading! This is very different from Bromboszcz's strategy. The latter, in the volume 918-578, expects his exclusive group of readers to be familiar with Hobbes and Nietzsche, to learn by heart the cipher according to which letters turn into numbers, and only then to read the

– in themselves, hardly coherent – verses. Podgórní chooses a different strategy, and offers to teach us to swim by... swimming, that is by throwing us into water and only giving us a hand when necessary. This difference becomes a visible aspect of his program at the end of the poem G:

*(And the peGplelGaded the sGtuatGonwGthprelGad
and*

let Gt mature.

And the peGplelGaded the situation with prelGad and

let it mature.

| And the people loaded the situation with preload and

o let it mature.)

After “o” and “i” are replaced with the letter “G”, the Cracovian poet himself gives us the key to this enigma, decoding “i” in the second, and “o” in the third verse. This way, the ciphered verse is fully uncovered and the author winks at us, at the same time pointing out something else – instead of a single decoding protocol, *Skanowanie balu* celebrates a variety of them, which virtually makes each poem a separate riddle, a different file to be unpacked in the reader’s mind. With each step, the user also learns to understand some tendencies, on the level of not only a single poem, but the whole, too: something similar to a palette with a set of paints and techniques, which bring the poems to life.

These colors are collections of languages and images,

overheard pieces of everyday talk and language of ever-present computers, which keep responding to us with shouts we only sometimes understand.

These languages and images ranging from the speech of the motherland and the idyllic image of the Polish countryside to environmental dialects of drunk hipsters and close-ups of keyboards and ashtrays enveloped in smoke. The space between those poles is where the poetic game takes place, which, for the reader, can be no less interactive than the (digital) *rozstrzelam krew* (English: *I'll execute blood*) or *krytyka chleba, gwiazd, kamienia* (English: *the criticism of bread, stars, stone*). Importantly, the hidden Dadaistic cybernetic procedure of mixing the paints on the palette is far removed from a cold, abstract throw of dice. Despite the obligatory roughness, many poems gain a smooth outline. A ball is a ball, after all, and so the poet is not afraid to put on a pre-war bowler hat, grab a cane and play the ringleader, as is the case in the poem *kursor znajduje się wewnątrz ramki* (English: *the cursor is located inside the frame*):

**what an edifice of meaning! a sneeze in the wig of the
plug from the pinned version. the lag of web produces
monsters.**

**rain from a cloud of tags, ladies and gents, will not fall
the balloon won't reach the next grade,
as if the indicators have grown long hair.**

with the above we thank: (put together in wilderness)

for the murmur of organisms:

Podgórní does not limit himself to one favored convention. The reader will find here examples of sententious gnomic poetry (*fotografia kursora, sorróweczka*), calligrams (*rozstrzelać krew (reprzyza)*) and songs with a chorus. Finally, there is something I like to call YouTube postcards, namely short impressions, triggered not by a scene from life, linguistic phenomenon or landscape, but by a just watched YouTube video (*poczta*) or a file shared on Facebook; there are also some ergodic or quasi-ergodic poems, such as (*przestrzeń rzęs*).

The poetic exploration of *Skanowanie balu* goes further than just pure aesthetics, linguistics and ludicity to offer an outline of a singular, flickering ontology inside of which the lines dividing digital and analogue, virtual and carnal become increasingly blurry. I cannot devoid myself of the pleasure of summoning one last example that illustrates this – the poem *Skasowanie balu* (English: *Deleting the Ball*):

I've noticed today in the mirror the first

ineffective pixel'

with an an unlocked appetite for

expertise. Under a sky

water sky, in a zeroed gasveiling.

*1 Freezes on a scratch on the main sink,
through which streaming flows faster than
the sleepings to the settings.*

These drops chill the taste of the medical term.

(Lick the scratch.)

*With help of the cursor, so almost manually, I examine the
chest of preference.*

The new, analogue poetry volume by Łukasz Podgórní proves the force of this comprehensive and very consequently developed creative project. At its core lies the very rule of literary language: an imperative to observe the conditions of its coming into existence, as Jerome McGann explains it. The conditions of Anno Domini 2013 must take into account the polimedial and polisemiotic potential of poetry, which the Cracovian author uses with lightness, a remarkably tweaked imagination, humor and something that often goes unnoticed: empathy for the reader. Too bad the authors of the self-absorbed fortress of print-and-print-only, praying for the next Nobel Prize, so rarely visit the ball: ESAD.

TRANSLATION: EWA BOMBA

First published:

http://techsty.art.pl/aktualnosci/2013/skanowanie_balu.html

BIO_

The background is a complex abstract composition. The left half is dominated by various shades of green, ranging from bright lime to deep forest green, with a prominent halftone dot pattern. The right half features a mix of purple, magenta, and dark blue tones, also with a halftone texture. The overall effect is a vibrant, textured collage of organic and geometric forms.

EWA BOMBA

is a translator of Polish, English and German. She is interested in Translation Studies, and is addicted to the Internet.

EMILIA BRANNY-JANKOWSKA

is a freelance researcher in the field of electronic literature and cybertext. She is the author of a number of publications in the field of cybertext theory and new media literature, as well as natural language processing. She gained her PhD in literary studies in 2010 at the Jagiellonian University, where she presented a thesis under the title *Cybertext: Methodology and Interpretation*. Much of it was prepared in Norway, where she worked for a year as a Marie Curie EST researcher. Since 2005 she has also worked as an IT engineer, having finished a Master's of Science at the University of Technology in Kraków. She prepared a curriculum and taught a course on Internet art at the Cultural Studies Department of the Jagiellonian University in 2010/2011. Currently she works as an IT consultant, hoping to eventually find a university affiliation as a researcher.

ROMAN BROMBOSZCZ

was born in 1970. His works border on visual arts, electro music, programming, and various scientific problems. He is the author of the following volumes of poetry: *digital.prayer*, *U-man i masa*, *Hz*, 918-578. He is a critic and curator of artistic events in the fields of literature, experimental music, video, installation and painting. He published *Estetyka zakłóceń*, a book about avant-garde and experimental phenomena in the art of the last two centuries, and *Ewolucja i wartość*, about the changing values

in European culture. He performs live, during multimedia solo performances, with *KALeKA* and with the project *Perfokarta*. He creates websites and heterarchical groups for collaboration and inspiration. He lives and works in Poznań.

MAŁGORZATA DAWIDEK GRYGLICKA

is a visual artist with a PhD in art history. She is an author of visual texts, text objects and hipertexts in public spaces and galleries. Her art is focused around the subject of the human body and the linguistic aspect of communication. In her theoretical works, she explores problems connected to the phenomenon of text seen as a work of art. She stages exhibitions and publishes in Poland and abroad. She is the editor of *Tekst-tura* (Kraków, 2005) and the author of the books *Odprysk poezji. Stanisław Dróżdż mówi* (Kraków 2012) and *Historia tekstu wizualnego. Polska po 1967 roku* (Kraków, 2012). She has received such scholarships as the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant Award (2004-2005), a scholarship from the Minister of Culture and National Heritage (2002, 2010) and the "Młoda Polska" scholarship (2012), as well as the National Centre for Culture Award for the best PhD thesis in the field of culture (2012).

KATARZYNA JANOTA

has studied design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Katowice, NWSAD in Wrexham and the University of Arts in Poznań. She specializes in illustration and typesetting. She likes to think of contemporary design as a new facet of Gesamtkunstwerk – and she openly admits how happy this idea makes her. She is

interested in the future of cultural press and the influence that graphic design has on readership.

LESZEK ONAK

is an application temporarily installed offline. The package includes a text editor, spreadsheet and dozens of vectors. The first edition, for computers using DOS, was launched in mid-1981. For many years, it was the main interface of the portal niedoczytania.pl, and later a relational database management system at liternet.pl. It is a spambot of the mailing system of cichynabiau.blogspot.com and a data compressor at ść-ch.pl. The latest version for analogue computers: *wgraa* (co-author). The application can be downloaded (for free) from http404.org.

URSZULA PAWLICKA

is a doctoral student of literary studies at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, who collaborates with Korporacja Ha!art and The Liternet Foundation. Her work has appeared in such publications as „Techsty”, „Lampa”, „Fragile”, „Czas Kultury”, artPapier, „Wakat” and Dwutygodnik.com, as well as in the book *Hiperteksty literackie. Literatura i nowe media* (Korporacja Ha!art). She worked on the art project *Cyfrowe zielone oko. Adaptacja poezji formistycznej Tytusa Czyżewskiego* (created by Łukasz Podgórn; Korporacja Ha!art). She is the author of *(Polska) poezja cybernetyczna. Konteksty i charakterystyka* (Korporacja Ha!art). Find her at ELMCIP: <http://elmcip.net/person/urszula-pawlicka>.

MARIUSZ PISARSKI

is a critic, translator and producer of digital literature. He created the journal *Techsty. Literatura i nowe media*. He publishes in Poland and abroad, popularizing electronic literature. He was nominated for the Ted Nelson Award by ACM (Association for Computing Machinery) at the Hypertext conference in 2011. He collaborates with the Electronic Literature Organization (ELO). He is the author of the book *Xanadu. Hipertekstowe przemiany prozy* (2013), as well as the chapbooks *The World in Hyper(de)scription: On the Film-poems of Katarzyna Giełżyńska* (with Piotr Marecki) and *Michael Joyce: A Polish Writer* (Korporacja Ha!art, 2011), and the editor of *Hiperteksty literackie. Literatura i nowe media*.

PIOTR PULDZIAN PŁUCIENNICZAK

is a post-poet, sociologist and communist.

ŁUKASZ PODGÓRNI

(born 1984) is a graphic artist and creator of applications and unidentified literary objects; he sculpts in audio files and trains speech synthesizers during stage performances. He has signed manifestos of cybernetic poetry, and has taken part in its initiatives (<http://cichynabiau.blogspot.com>, <http://perfokarta.net>). He is the author of the volumes *Skanowanie balu* (2012), *noce i pętle* (2010) and the co-author of poetic newsletters *Kryzys* (2009), *ZBIÓR PUSTY* (2013), as well as the poemographic split *wgraa* (2012). In cooperation with Urszula Pawlicka, he has compiled a collection of digital adaptations of poems by Tytus Czyżewski (2012). Find him online at: <http://szafranchinche>.

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